

WHISPERING GALLERY:
WAR AND SOCIETY DURING THE KOREAN CONFLICT AND THE
SOCIAL CONSTITUTION OF THE COLD WAR, 1945-1953

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Based on research in thirty-eight archives and libraries in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Britain, and the United States, this dissertation reconsiders the nature of the phenomenon known as the "Cold War." It does so through synthesizing diplomatic and social history, as well as local and global history, arguing that the Cold War was not a situation, but a lens through which many people observed world situations, less a geopolitical and ideological confrontation between the two superpowers than an imagined reality that functioned in restoring state order at the international level, recapturing and preserving social "harmony" at the national level, and overcoming diverse social and cultural conflicts at social and community levels—a mechanism of tranquilization that operated quite "well" during the so-called Cold War period.

The dissertation consists of three parts. The first examines the years between 1945 and the summer of 1950, and argues that the Cold War in this period remained a disputable discourse, only one of a number of possible worldviews due to its fragmented, nebulous, and discursive nature. The second focuses on the months in the summer and fall of 1950 following the outbreak of the Korean War, tracing how the imagined reality of the Cold War solidified, and looking into who participated in the making of such a reality, through analyzing the interplay between state and

society in the formation of American and Chinese foreign and domestic policies during the Korean War. The third investigates the global phenomenon of social purges during the Korean War period, in which local actors—not only state officials but also ordinary people—stifled dissent and “purify” society under the logic of the East-West confrontation, often choosing particular kinds of order and reality that lasted for decades to follow.

In sum, through tracing the gigantic social construction of the Cold War during the Korean Conflict, this study attempts to explain why such an imagined reality materialized in the postwar period particularly during the Korean War, why millions of people throughout the world participated in the making of the Cold War, and, finally, what the Cold War truly was.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born and raised up in Osaka, Japan, Masuda Hajimu studied International Relations at Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto. After graduation, he worked as a journalist for a newspaper in Japan. He came to the United States in September 2001, taught Japanese at an alternative high school in Southern California, and attended Northwest College, Powell, WY, and Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ, majoring in history and photography. At Cornell, Masuda received his M.A. in 2008, and Ph.D. in 2012, specializing in global and international history, with a primary focus on East Asia and the United States. The author's name is a Japanese name; the family name is Masuda.

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents and wife.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Looking back at the years spent on my dissertation, I feel anew that I have been extremely fortunate to work with exceptional scholars and friends at Cornell. My advisor Fredrik Logevall always encouraged my ambitious project, read all drafts, chapter by chapter, and even section by section, participated in all of my presentations at Cornell, gave me straightforward and practical advice and constructive criticism, and maintained a high-standard of accuracy and style in writing, providing me a model of a mentor and scholar. Chen Jian, in a different way, has provided a model of an international scholar who is active and enthusiastic in both research and lecturing, in both China and the United States. Professor Chen has rigorously read my writings since the time they were still term papers, and provided numerous comments on almost each page, often reminding me of various aspects I had overlooked. J. Victor Koschmann, from the viewpoint of an intellectual historian, always provided precious comments, with insights that would never have occurred to me otherwise, and assisted me in viewing and discussing my project in a theoretical and conceptual manner. Beyond my dissertation committee, I am particularly grateful to Walter LaFeber, Peter J. Katzenstein, and Katsuya Hirano, who read parts of the dissertation when they were still term or colloquium papers, and helped me to elaborate on ideas and sharpen arguments.

If there is a single most important factor that helped me to think deeply and to continue to work on my project, it is the existence of diverse forums for discussions at Cornell. Among others, an interdisciplinary dissertation writing group

that lasted almost three years played a key role in formulating my ideas and forcing me working on the dissertation to keep up with our regular meetings. This writing group provided priceless opportunities to test emerging ideas and arguments in front of members from diverse fields, such as literature, science and technology studies, and theater, film, and dance studies, as well as cultural and intellectual history. I am most indebted to the members of this group: Chris Ahn, Samson Lim, Honghong Tinn, and Akiko Ishii, as well as Chunyen Wang, who joined later. I thank the Society for the Humanities and the Institute for Comparative Modernities for providing funding to sustain our regular meetings and dinners for years.

By the same token, I benefited from listening to diverse feedback and critiques I have received at number of the Americas Colloquium, Asian Colloquium, and professionalization workshop in the Department of History, as well as the Peace Studies Program Dinner Seminar. Through my nine presentations at Cornell, I am indebted to participants, in particular, Edward Baptist, Chen Jian, Sherman Cochran, Duane Corpis, Matthew Evangelista, Durba Ghosh, TJ Hinrichs, Katsuya Hirano, J. Victor Koschmann, Fredrik Logevall, Mary Beth Norton, Jon Parmenter, Judith Reppy, Naoki Sakai, Aaron Sachs, and Claudia Verhoeven, as well as Claudine Ang, Deokhyo Choi, Mari Crabtree, Brian Cuddy, Sean Fear, Noriaki Hoshino, Akiko Ishii, Christopher Jones, Peter Lavelle, Samson Lim, Daegan Miller, Jorge Rivera Marin, Mike Schmidli, Rebecca Tally, Christopher Tang, Irene Vrinte, Yuanchong Wang, We Jung Yi, and Taomo Zhou, for their comments on various portions of my dissertation. David S. Foglesong and Sato Shohei, though living far away from Ithaca, also read

chapters and gave thorough feedback. Sujin Lee helped me to romanize Korean names.

In addition to intellectual benefits, I am deeply indebted on more tangible levels to various fellowships that made it possible for me to concentrate on the dissertation for most of my time at Cornell. Indeed, I could not have completed the dissertation without generous support from the Peace Studies Program, East Asia Program, History Department, and Graduate School at Cornell. They have accommodated me with an inestimable blessing—time—that allowed my project to ripen, through providing: the Sage Fellowship in 2005-06, Fall 2009, and Fall 2011; the PSP Graduate Student Fellowship in Spring 2007; the PSP Bluestone Fellowship in Spring 2010; and the History Department's Boldt Fellowship in Fall 2008; and the EAP's Robert J. Smith Fellowship in Fall 2006, Spring 2009, and Spring 2011. The Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) provided me a one-year Dissertation Completion Fellowship in 2010-11, a crucial, privileged period, during which most of my dissertation chapters, which were still scattered pieces of writing, blended into an organically unified narrative. During this period, the Graduate School and East Asia Program generously provided funding for full tuition, enabling me to continue writing my dissertation at Cornell.

Furthermore, a teaching assistant fellowship in 2007-08 offered me not only full funding but also an invaluable opportunity to work with Professor Logevall on his survey courses on U.S. foreign relations history, which not only deepened my knowledge of the subject, but provided a model of lecturing at large class. In addition to the aforementioned financial support, Olin Library and the History

Department equipped me with desks and offices, respectively, in which I spent, literally, most of my time, and wrestled with, first, a mountain of documents, and, second, the task of writing and rewriting. Michelle Nair and Barb Donnell helped me to secure places to work in the library and department, respectively.

If I spent most of my time in my offices in Olin Library and McGraw Hall during the semesters, I spent all of summer and winter breaks for my research trips to thirty eight archives and libraries in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Such an extensive and worldwide research would have been inconceivable without plentiful—indeed, more than two dozen—travel and research grants provided by: the Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies, East Asia Program, American Studies Program, Department of History, and Graduate School at Cornell. In particular, I am grateful to the Graduate School for their support of my study of Korean at Yonsei University in the summer of 2007; the EAP and Einaudi Center for enabling me to reside in Beijing and Tokyo for seven months from the summer of 2008 to early 2009, during which I was able to conduct research in Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Hong Kong, Changchun, Osaka, and Tokyo; American Studies Program and Graduate School for supporting my two-month research trip in the summer of 2009 to Norfolk, VA, Iowa City, IA, Independence, MO, Reno, NV, and Berkeley, CA—an 8,000-mile, cross-continental round trip by car; and the Einaudi Center for proving funding for my research trip to Taipei and Tokyo in the winter of 2009-10. In addition, the American Studies Program, Graduate School, and SHAFR offered funding that enabled me to conduct research in London in the summer of 2010. These “research” trips provided me not only fruitful outcomes in

terms of research, but also, in many cases, a lot of fun in visiting new places, meeting new people, and eating new food, satisfying my almost-innate taste for the joy of traveling and backpacking.

In the course of these two dozen research trips, I have been indebted to numerous archivists, librarians, and scholars. In China, Shen Zhihua, Li Danhui, and Zhou Na at East China Normal University, Yu Qun and Zhang Yang at Northeast Normal University, and Xiao Jin at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, assisted my research in various ways. In particular, Shen Zhihua wrote reference letters and gave me precious advice on archival research in China. In the United States, as well, my research could not have been completed without the meticulous support, and, in some cases, intuition, of archivists. I am especially thankful to James W. Zobel at the MacArthur Memorial Archives, Norfolk, VA, and David Clark and Samuel Rushay at the Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, MO.

In the past five years, each chapter—in some chapters, each section—of my dissertation has been presented at, in total, nineteen academic conferences outside Cornell, including annual conferences at SHAFR, AAS, and NYCAS, as well as a number of graduate conferences and international conferences in Bristol, UK, Paris, France, Hangzhou, China, and many places in the United States. Numerous people have attended my presentations, given both positive and critical feedback, and encouraged me in pursuing this project. I am deeply grateful to Michael Allen, Balogh H. Balogh, Mark Bradley, Gregg Brazinsky, Alexander Bukh, Julia C. Bullock, Adam Cathcart, Chen Jian, Brett de Bary, Mario Del Pero, Richard Filipink, late Ilya Gaiduk, James Z. Gao, Yanjie Gao, Hope M. Harrison, Laura Hein, Gail Hershatter,

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As an international student, I am most indebted to my language teachers in English, Chinese, and Korean in the past decade. I express sincere thanks to: Robert Stothart, Ingrid M. Arnesen, Stewart Markel, and Jay S. Winston. In particular, Jay, with meticulous eyes and care for style, patiently read all of my chapters, and helped me to sharpen their arguments, and forced me to clarify otherwise ambiguous points. Rob, a poet and my first ESL teacher at Northwest College, Powell, WY, read short pieces of writing and patiently corrected them every day throughout the summer of 2003 when I was struggling with learning English. In a similar way, I am indebted to my Chinese teachers, Richard Simmons at Rutgers, and Frances Yufen Lee Mehta and Qiuyun Teng at Cornell. I also thank the teaching staff at summer language programs at Jilin University in Changchun, China, and Yonsei University in Seoul, South Korea, where I learned Chinese and Korean, respectively.

The completion of this dissertation coincides with the close of my long journey in the United States before heading for Singapore to begin teaching as an

assistant professor at National University of Singapore. Leaving a newspaper company in Japan in September 2001, I arrived at Los Angeles on October 7, 2001, the day that the United States began bombing Afghanistan. While, at that time, I was inclined toward the idea of becoming a photo journalist and did not think about pursuing a Ph.D. in history, in retrospect, this dissertation might have taken root long before I came to Cornell. The seeds of this project, in effect, germinated through numerous communications with a variety of people concerning what was going on within and outside of the United States in the aftermath of September 11, 2001. In a sense, this dissertation is pretty much a product of the era. Thus, I feel indebted to various conversations before coming to Cornell, including those with my colleagues at *Mainichi Shinbun* [Mainichi Newspaper], Harriet Bloom-Wilson, Richard Wilson, Mary Baumann, Steve Thulin, Woody Wooden, and Rob Stothart at Northwest College, as well as David Foglesong and Michael Adas at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

Above all, Akiko Ishii has contributed to my project enormously. Since we first met at a graduate seminar and together took on the role of discussants for a thick history book on Stalinism, I have been continually amazed by her intellectual ability in discussing history in a conceptual and abstract manner—an aspect I had totally neglected, previously. Since then, when coming up with new findings and arguments, I have always tested them with her; when she was excited, I developed them, and, if not, I throw them out. In this way, in all processes of conducting research, forming ideas, testing arguments, and writing and rewriting chapters, Akiko has been always the first and most candid—often most critical—listener and

reader of my work. Indeed, this dissertation could not have been completed without her encouragement, camaraderie, trust, and love. Finally, I owe the greatest thanks to my parents, Masuda Hiroshi and Masuda Emiko, who have cultivated my curiosity in writing, history, and travel since I was small through buying me countless fiction and nonfiction books, taking me to temples, shrines, and museums, and taking me on short trips during summer breaks. More than anything else, I am grateful that they have never forced me to follow a particular way of life, and have patiently and warmly encouraged my journey all along. This dissertation, thus, is dedicated to my parents and Akiko. With its completion, I feel that I have finally arrived at the end of the earth, and here, at this point, the sea begins.

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Introduction

"If any one thing more than another could advance the cause to which the western nations are bending their efforts, it would be to stop describing it as the 'cold war.'" So argued a cover article in the British *Economist* on May 27, 1950. It maintained as such because, whatever the term had meant when it first coined, it now had the effect in the public mind of making the western powers appear as the aggressor.¹ The article contended:

[T]he policy to which the western powers are committed is not one that aims at fighting the Russian Communists and destroying their regimes; it is aimed at preventing such a war from breaking out and at reaching a *modus vivendi* with the Soviets. Its object is peace, not war; agreement, not conquest. [...]. The talk [...] of a 'cold war' is to confuse minds and darken counsel. It is time the western peoples dropped the term entirely from their political vocabulary and used instead a phrase [...] that genuinely expresses their firm but pacific purposes.²

Within a few years, if not months, such critiques disappeared. In this short period of time, the manner of spelling out the phenomenon changed as well; the situation that had been described "a cold war" or "the so-called cold war" in the late 1940s came to be commonly known as "the Cold War" by the mid-1950s. This transition from a lower- to uppercase implies that the bi-polar confrontation no longer represented a number of disputable opinions, but one that was now widely accepted as a substantial, irrefutable actuality of the world. This gradual revelation of the Cold War, however, also suggests the constructed nature of the conflict that *became* "reality," as opposed to something that existed as an objective situation immediately following World War II. How did such a "reality" become solidified in the postwar

¹ "Our Weekly Letter," No. 17, June 2, 1950, Working-Class Movement Library, Salford, U.K; "Peace versus Peace," *The Economist*, May 27, 1950, 1153-54.

² Ibid.

era, and during the Korean War, in particular, and why? What was, after all, the so-called Cold War?

This dissertation is an attempt to rewrite the formation of the Cold War through synthesizing social and diplomatic history, as well as local and global history. Based on archival research in thirty-eight archives and libraries in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Britain, and the United States, this study primarily focuses on the crucial moment of the Korean Conflict circa 1950, and examines the ways in which local actors around the world—from elite policymakers to ordinary people—interpreted the meaning of the Korean War through the lenses of their own local contexts, participated in a multilayered politics of knowledge production in their hometowns, and eventually paved the way toward maintaining a particular Cold War world, thereafter.³

³ The Korean War has been a topic for discussion for more than six decades. Early scholarship in the late 1950s and early 1960s tended to view it through a Cold War lens, and viewing it in the shadow of World War II, describing, thus, it as “America’s ‘Rhineland’” and a “limited war” that prevented World War III. See, for example, Robert E. Osgood, *Limited War: The Challenge to American Security* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957) and David Rees, *Korea: The Limited War* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1964).

The experience of the Vietnam War changed historians’ attitudes. In light of Vietnam, the Korean War came to be reexamined, described, in the words of Callum MacDonald, as the “war before Vietnam.” More critical toward U.S. intervention to Asia, the aspect of civil war in Korea became the central focus. This view was most powerfully expressed in Bruce Cumings’ two-volume work, as well as Allan Millett’s study on domestic struggles before 1950 and his two-volume work on the conflict. See Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War Vol. I-II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981-1990); Callum MacDonald, *Korea: The War Before Vietnam* (New York: The Free Press, 1986); John R. Merrill, *Korea: The Peninsular Origins of the War* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1989), and Allan R. Millett, *The War for Korea, Vol. I-II* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2005-2010).

The American side of story has been carefully examined from various angles; For the scholarship that scrutinized roles played by high-ranking policymakers, see, for example, Glenn Paige, *The Korean Decision: June 24-30, 1950* (New York: The Free Press, 1968); Ernest May, “Lesson” of the Past: *The Use and Misuse of History in American Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973); and Arnold A. Offner, *Another Such Victory: President Truman and the Cold War, 1945-1953* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002). For studies that explored the interconnection between domestic politics and the Korean War, see, for example, Rosemary Foot, *The Wrong War: American Policy and the Dimensions of the Korean Conflict, 1950-1953* (Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 1985) and Burton Kaufman, *The Korean War: Challenges in Crisis, Credibility, and Command*, 2nd ed. (New

York: McGraw-Hill Companies, 1997 [1986]). For studies directed toward a broader audience interested in military history, see, for instance, David Halberstam, *The Coldest Winter: America and the Korean War* (New York: Hyperion, 2007) and Max Hastings, *The Korean War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987). For more detailed discussion on the Korean War and the United States, see Chapter 3.

With the opening of archives in the Soviet Union in the 1990s, a new tide of scholarship emerged, often emphasizing the role played by Moscow. See, for instance, S. N. Goncharov, John Wilson Lewis, and Litai Xue, *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1993); V. M. Zubok and Konstantin Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996); Vojtech Mastny, *The Cold War and Soviet Insecurity: The Stalin Years* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); Anatoliĭ V. Torkunov, *Chōsen sensō no nazo to shinjitsu: Kin Nissei, Sutārin, Mō Takutō no kimitsu denpō ni yoru* [The Myth and Truth of the Korean War: Based on Declassified Correspondence among Kim Il-sung, Stalin, and Mao Zedong], Translation of *Zagadochnaiā voĭna: koreĭskii konflikt 1950-1953 godov* (2000) by Shimotomai Nobuo (Tokyo: Sōshisha, 2001); Kathryn Weathersby, "Soviet Aims in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War, 1945-50: New Evidence From the Russian Archives," *CWIHP Working Paper* No. 8. (November 1993) and "'Should We Fear This?' Stalin and the Danger of War with America." *CWIHP Working Paper*, No. 39 (July 2002); and Mansourov, Alexandre Y. "Stalin, Mao, Kim, and China's Decision to Enter the Korean War, September 16-October 15, 1950." *CWIHP Bulletin* 6/7 (1995).

With the opening of archives in People's Republic of China in the 1990s, research on the Chinese side evolved rapidly, as well. Utilizing newly available documents, a number of Chinese scholars explicate the roles played by Beijing, in particular elaborating on Mao Zedong's personality, ideology, and political considerations. See, for instance, Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); Shu Guang Zhang, *Mao's Military Romanticism: China and the Korean War, 1950-1953* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1995); Shen Zhihua, *Mao Zedong, Sidalin yu Chaoxian zhanzheng* [Mao Zedong, Stalin, and the Korean War] (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 2007); Yang Kuisong *Mao Zedong yu Mosike di en en yuan yuan* [Mao Zedong's Indebtedness and Bitterness toward Moscow] (Nanchang: Jiangxi renmin chubanshe, 1999), and Niu Jun, "The birth of the People's Republic of China and the road to the Korean War" in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War Vol. 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 221-243. For more detailed discussion on China and the Korean War, see Chapter 4.

With such a dramatic increase in the amount of declassified documents from former communist countries, the 1990s observed the maturity of "international history" of the Korean War, generally concentrating on decisions and correspondences among high-ranking policymakers, such as Harry S. Truman, Dean Acheson, Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong, and Kim Il-sung, a trend that developed with what was called "New Cold War history." With its emphasis on contingency, human agency (leadership), and international aspects, work of this kind tended to challenge the previously dominant interpretation that described the Korean War more in terms of historical continuity, structural force, and domestic aspects. See, for instance, William Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995) and John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know*; and Wada Haruki, *Chōsen Sensō Zenshi* [A Total History of the Korean War] (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 2002).

Along with these developments in international approaches, other new kinds of research have blossomed in recent decades, shedding light on diverse topics such as social and cultural aspects, domestic political considerations, propaganda and mobilization, and ordinary people's lives. See, for instance, Thomas J. Christensen, *Useful Adversaries: Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization, and Sino-American Conflict, 1947-1958* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); Paul G. Pierpaoli, *Truman and Korea: The Political Culture of the Early Cold War* (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1999); Steven Casey, *Selling the Korean War: Propaganda, Politics, and Public Opinion in the United States, 1950-1953* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Xiaobing Li and Richard A. Peters, *Voices from the Korean War: Personal Stories of American, Korean, and Chinese*

My principal concern, thus, is not when the Cold War began or who initiated it, but literally how the “reality” of the Cold War was produced and consolidated, and why. Therefore, my research investigates not only policymaking processes during this period, but the integral role of popular imagination in framing and conventionalizing this “reality,” inquiring into how such an imagined “reality” of the Cold War, fueled by fear, antagonism, images of enemies, and memories of World War II, eventually *became* the irrefutable actuality of the postwar period. In a sense, this is not a Cold War history that presupposes the existence of the Cold War. To be precise, this is a history of a *fantasy* of the Cold War, with its focus on the

Soldiers (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2004); and Philip West ed., *Remembering the "Forgotten War": The Korean War Through Literature and Art* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2001).

In contrast to the research on American, Russian, Chinese, and international aspects of the war, one crucial subject has lagged behind until recently: the Korean side. This situation improved dramatically in the last decade with the emergence of new research, primarily in South Korea that scrutinized diverse experiences of Koreans during and after the war—that is, social history of the Korean War. The topics include, for instance, massacres, evacuation, occupation, and daily lives of ordinary Koreans during the war. See, for instance, Kim Tong-ch'un (Dong-choon), *Chŏnjaeng kwa sahoe: uri ege Han'guk chŏnjaeng ūn muŏt iŏnna?* [War and Society: What was the Korean War for Us?]: (Paju, South Korea: Tolbegae, 2006). A Japanese translation was published in 2009; *Chōsen Sensō no Shakaishi: Hinan, Senryō, Gyakusatsu* [A Social History of the Korean War: Evacuation, Occupation, Massacre], translation of (Tōkyō: Heibonsha, 2008). An English translation was published in 2009; *The Unending Korean War: A Social History* (Larkspur, CA: Tamal Vista, 2009). Pak Myōng-nim (Park Myung-lim), *Han'guk 1950: chŏnjaeng kwa p'yŏnghwa* [Korea 1950: War and Peace] (Seoul, South Korea: Nanam Ch'ulp'an, 2002). A Japanese translation was published in 2004; *Sensō to Heiwa: Chōsen Hantō 1950* [War and Peace: The Korean Peninsula, 1950] (Tōkyō: Shakai Hyōronsha, 2009). Hwang Sōg-yōng [Seok-yeong], *Sonnim* [The Visitors] (Seoul: Ch'angjak kwa pip'yōngsa, 2001). A Japanese translation was published in 2004; *Sonnimu* [The Visitors] (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2004). Also, see Charles K. Armstrong, *The North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003); Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005).

For more detailed discussions of historiography of the Korean War, see Allan R. Millett, “The Korean War: A 50-Year Critical Historiography,” in *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (March 2001). For the overview of Korean War literature and topics, see, for example, James I. Matray, *Historical Dictionary of the Korean War* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991); Lester H. Brune, *The Korean War: Handbook of the Literature and Research* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996); Paul M. Edwards, *The Korean War: An Annotated Bibliography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998) and *The Korean War: A Historical Dictionary* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), and Allan R. Millett, *The Korean War: The Essential Bibliography* (Washington D.C.: Potomac, 2007). While the focus of this dissertation is not so much the Korean War itself as its broader effects—the materialization of the Cold War—during that period, it intends to incorporate various findings and approaches presented in existing literature on the Korean War.

materialization of the conflict, which was brought about globally and simultaneously in the postwar world.⁴

The methodology used and questions raised in this project differ significantly from those of most existing scholarship. To be sure, the Cold War has now developed into a subject of study not only in the fields of diplomatic history and political science, but in social and cultural history, as well as literature, film, art, rhetoric, and communications studies. Scholarship in the former set of field has addressed the subject through elucidating the roles of states and policymakers—the traditional strength of diplomatic history: investigating policymakers' intentions and calculations. In the latter field, scholars have examined and analyzed images, identities, and the many forms of cultural production shaped by the Cold War.⁵ As prominent historian of the Cold War Melvyn Leffler has lamented, however, these areas of scholarship have been developing rather separately without examination of the links between them.⁶

In recent decades, scholarship on the Cold War has further proliferated with the spread of international and transnational approaches based on multilingual research, as well as the deepening of cultural approaches exploring issues of race, gender, emotions, and so forth, both of which have significantly informed my

⁴ For earlier discussions of the imagined nature of the war, see, for instance, Mary Kaldor, *The Imaginary War: Understanding the East-West Conflict* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1990).

⁵ An enormous amount of scholarship exists, but, for the former, see, for example, John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York, 1997); Melvyn Leffler, *Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, 1992); and Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-2006*, 10th ed. (Boston, 2008 [1967]). For the latter, see, for example, Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York, 1988); and Stephen J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore, 1996).

⁶ Melvyn Leffler, "New Approaches, Old Interpretations, and Prospective Reconfigurations," in Michael Hogan ed., *America in the World: The Historiography of American Foreign Relations Since 1941* (New York, 1995).

thinking and research agenda.⁷ In addition to these trends, there has been a revival of domestic-political approaches,⁸ as well as a methodological contention urging the need to “take off” the Cold War lens.⁹ In short, the field of diplomatic history, once described as boring and uncreative, is now becoming a vibrant field with diverse approaches and viewpoints. Yet, even with the development of such new trends in recent years, the gap Leffler identified has tended toward widening and solidifying, rather than being bridged.¹⁰

Thus, there remains an opportunity to synthesize diverse approaches, and to examine reciprocal interactions between policymakers’ decision-making processes, domestic politics, socio-cultural environments, and the daily life of everyday people, on a worldwide scale and through a multilingual method. In an attempt to forge bridge among these, four interrelated sets of questions run through this narrative.

⁷ For the spread of the internationalization approach, see, for example, Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (New York, 2005) and Zachary Karabell, *Architects of Intervention: The United States, the Third World, and the Cold War, 1946-1962* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1999). While differing in terms of topic, see, also, Mark Atwood Lawrence, *Assuming the Burden: Europe and the American Commitment to War in Vietnam* (Berkeley, 2005), Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria’s Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (New York, 2002), and Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (New York, 2007). For the deepening of cultural approach, see, for instance, Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, MA, , 2003), and Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, 2002).

⁸ For instance, see Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall, *America’s Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity* (Cambridge, MA, 2009); Fredrik Logevall, *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of War in Vietnam* (Berkeley, 2001); and Andrew L. Johns, *Vietnam’s Second Front: Domestic Politics, the Republican Party, and the War* (Lexington, KY, 2010).

⁹ Matthew Connelly, “Taking Off the Cold War Lens: Visions of North-South Conflict During the Algerian War for Independence,” *American Historical Review* 105, no. 3 (2000): 739-769.

¹⁰ There has been a call for new research to forge bridges between politics and diplomacy and culture and society. See, for instance, Patrick Major and Rana Mitter, “East is East and West is West? Towards a Comparative Socio-Cultural History of the Cold War” in Major and Mitter ed., *Across the Blocs: Cold War Cultural and Social History* (Portland, WA, 2004), 1-18. Exemplary work that combined an international approach with analysis of social and cultural contexts includes, Mark Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America: The Making of Postcolonial Vietnam, 1919-1950* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2000); Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Detente* (Cambridge, MA, 2003); and Gregg Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea: Koreans, Americans, and the Making of a Democracy* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

First, focusing on domestic politics is an effective starting point. As a number of scholars including Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall have pointed out, domestic considerations, such as partisan politics and electoral campaigns, had a significant impact on the making of America's Cold War strategies in the later 1940s and early 1950s.¹¹ To what extent can we find a similar pattern in other countries at that time? While the interplay between domestic politics and international politics is, by now, generally accepted, how can we demonstrate it, and in what way did domestic and global affairs interconnect and interact at the time of the solidification of the Cold War?¹²

This first set of questions leads to the second set, concerned with society and culture underneath domestic politics. After all, no political decisions existed in a vacuum; all political struggles are contingent historically, and constructed socially and culturally. To be sure, this is a point that has been raised since the 1970s by numerous scholars, including Akira Iriye, Michael H. Hunt, and Peter J. Katzenstein, to name a few.¹³ And, indeed, much scholarship has explored intersections between

¹¹ Craig and Logevall, *America's Cold War*; Fredrik Logevall, "A Critique of Containment." *Diplomatic History* 28, no. 4 (2004): 473-499; Robert David Johnson, *Congress and the Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); and Melvin Small, *Democracy & Diplomacy: The Impact of Domestic Politics on U.S. Foreign Policy, 1789-1994* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

¹² Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, ix; Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993); Robert Dallek, *The American Style of Foreign Policy: Cultural Politics and Foreign Affairs* (New York: Knopf, 1983).

¹³ Akira Iriye, "Culture and International History," in Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson. ed., *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004). 241-256; Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987). Peter J. Katzenstein ed., *The Culture of National Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996). Also, see, for instance, Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, *Culture and International History* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003); Christian G. Appy, *Cold War Constructions: The Political Culture of United States Imperialism, 1945-1966* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000); Frank Costigliola, "Reading for Meaning: Theory, Language, and Metaphor," in Hogan and Paterson ed., *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, 279-303; Andrew J. Rotter, "Empires of the Senses: How Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, Tasting, and Touching Shaped Imperial Encounters," *Diplomatic History*, Volume 35, Issue 1 (January 2011): 3-19.

culture and politics, particularly shedding light on, for instance, political impact on cultural production and social life,¹⁴ policymakers' effort to manipulate political culture,¹⁵ and long-standing cultural tradition and historical continuity beneath political affairs.¹⁶

Yet, as Leffler has lamented, few have aimed at integrating studies of culture and society with politics in a way that explains processes of policymaking and foreign strategies in a particular moment.¹⁷ In what way, indeed, did cultural and social forces appear and function in politics, particularly on the level of decision making? While policymakers might be able to take advantage of their positions in conducting political campaigns, propaganda, and educational programs, culture is not the product of these. Nor does it simply exist "out there," as it is. A culture, in the words of a literary critic Lionel Trilling, "is not a flow, not even a confluence; the form of its existence is struggle, or at least debate—it is nothing if not a dialectic."¹⁸ Then, the old but still valid questions are: To what extent did historical and cultural elements in society at a particular moment of emerge and play roles in influencing

¹⁴ Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); JoAnne Brown, "'A is for Atom, B is for Bomb': Civil Defense in American Public Education, 1948-1963," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 75, No.1 (June 1988); May, *Homeward Bound*; and Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War*.

¹⁵ Walter Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-1961* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); Kenneth A. Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas, 2006); and Kenneth A. Osgood, "Hearts and Minds: The Unconventional Cold War," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 4.2 (2002).

¹⁶ Westad, *The Global Cold War*; Michael Adas, *Dominance by Design: Technological Imperatives and America's Civilizing Mission* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006); and Anders Stephenson, *Manifest Destiny: American Expansionism and the Empire of Right* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995).

¹⁷ A few successful works include, for instance, John Fousek, *To Lead the Free World: American Nationalism and the Cultural Roots of the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2000); Seth Jacobs, *America's Miracle Man in Vietnam: Ngo Dinh Diem, Religion, Race, and U.S. Intervention in Southeast Asia* (Durham, NC, 2004); Kristin Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

¹⁸ Lionel Trilling, *The Liberal Imagination* (1950), cited in James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945-1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 12.

the course of diplomatic and international history? In particular, what roles were played by these in the making and consolidation of the “reality” of the Cold War world during the Korean War period?

This second set of inquiries further leads us to the third set, regarding carriers, the micro component of society and culture—the people. As political scientist Richard Benseel points out, the reproduction of culture through time mostly depends on preferences and choices made by numberless, nameless people, who are often unaware that they are responsible for maintaining, choosing, and changing the culture to which they belong.¹⁹ Then, the questions are: What were such preferences and choices of ordinary people at the time that the “reality” of the Cold War emerged in the postwar, particularly during the Korean War period? How did they behave and, in many cases, even take an advantage of situations? The point here is, as political scientist Stuart Kaufman points out, not so much about people’s “objective” interests, as their attitudes and the myths and symbols that influenced those attitudes.²⁰ In a similar tone, eminent Cold War historian John Lewis Gaddis urged, “[W]e have to take seriously what *they at that time believed*.”²¹ In another article, he elaborates on this point in detail:

There is [...] confusion about the proper scope and content of international history. If, on the one hand, we confine it to what leaders said and did to one another, then it is hard to see how it differs from the old diplomatic history most of us have long since rejected. If, on the other hand, it expands to take into account masses as well as elites, then it will have to grapple with what was in *their* minds and what determined *their* actions [...]. So what *did*

¹⁹ Richard Benseel, quoted in Masuda Hajimu, “Rumors of War: Immigration Disputes and the Social Construction of American-Japanese Relations, 1905-1913.” *Diplomatic History* 33: 1 (Jan. 2009): 4.

²⁰ Stuart J. Kaufman, *Modern Hatreds: The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 221.

²¹ Gaddis, *We Now Know*, 287.

ordinary people during the Cold War really think? Perhaps we should ask them.²²

As these scholars advocate, it is important to cast light on popular myths and emotions among ordinary people at that time, not merely as *effects* of, but rather as *factors creating* the “reality” of the Cold War.²³ Such examination of everyday people’s voices and behaviors would enable us to analyze the societies and cultures they made, social orders they composed, and domestic politics in which they took part.

We might be able to conclude out series of questions at this point, if this were a study of a pre-modern society, or even of a nineteenth century society, when ordinary people had relatively less contact with the “outer” world beyond their society. Nevertheless, such is not the case for a study of the mid-twentieth century. This is because, in the era of globalization, peoples’ voices and emotions easily cross national boundaries, affecting and being affected by one another, and changing on their own, often in direct response to the progress of foreign events. The fourth set of questions, thus, is: To what extent did global and transnational factors have effects on peoples’ lives in societies? In what way did domestic events have far-reaching effects on the attitudes of people living in distant places? What happened in domestic and international politics through the processes of locals’ observations of global events, such as the progress of the Korean War?

²² John Lewis Gaddis, “On Starting All Over Again: A Naïve Approach to the Study of the Cold War,” in Odd Arne Westad ed. *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, and Theory* (Portland, OR: F. Cass, 2000), 36.

²³ Much of the existing scholarship on the Korean War period has tended to rule out everyday people and their imaginations from its analyses, or otherwise depicted them as objects to be manipulated. See, for instance, Steven Casey, *Selling the Korean War: Propaganda, Politics, and Public Opinion in the United States* (New York, 2008); Paul G. Pierpaoli, *Truman and Korea: The Political Culture of the Early Cold War* (Columbia, 1999).

Studies on “globalization” have tended to focus on the active actors of the phenomenon, such as the global transfer and high-mobility of people, goods, and capital. But equally, or, arguably, more, essential were the passive actors in the phenomenon, the large majorities of populations, who stayed within their boundaries, while facing the spread of news, ideas, and emotions across borders. Such numerous local actors experiencing the waves of globalization at home were no less important than global and transnational actors, such as missionaries, immigrants, travelers, merchants, teachers, and international students. This was because it was they, the large majorities in societies, who stayed at home, and who symbolically associated foreign affairs with local events through local lenses, playing significant roles in limiting the range of probable domestic and foreign policies administrators could pursue.²⁴

This final set of inquiries, on global and transnational factors, thus, eventually leads back to the first, concerning domestic politics, forming a circle. These themes are not isolated from one another, but interlinked. The crux lies in the reevaluation of policymaking processes, society, culture, everyday people, and their mentalities, in an organically united manner for the analysis of global history of the postwar period. This attempt to address each set of questions while forging bridges among them requires demanding, though not contradictory, tasks for researchers because it necessitates investigation in two radically different directions. One involves going deep into the analysis of society and peoples’ lives, exploring interconnections between politics and society, and between elite policymakers and

²⁴ For this topic, see, for instance, a collection of articles in Anthony G. Hopkins ed., *Global History: Interactions Between the Universal and the Local* (London: Macmillan, 2006).

everyday people—a type of scholarship that entails both political/diplomatic and social/cultural history. The other involves expanding globally, tracing the interplay and a series of repercussions among societies and among peoples in distance places—a type of research that involves the integration of local and global history.

That is why I had to visit more than three dozen archives and libraries in China, Taiwan, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In addition to archives that primarily concentrate on centers of political power,²⁵ it was necessary to conduct research in archives in which I could explore social movements, election campaigns, and ordinary people's voices and behaviors.²⁶ Furthermore, it was indispensable to read piles of local newspapers at a number of libraries and archives for each society to have a sense of social attitudes and “common sense” at the time in question in each place.²⁷

Such extensive research might have been inconceivable were it not for a dramatic change in research methodology experienced in recent years: the use of search engines before physically going to and within archives; the use of digital cameras in archives; the use of personal computers to organize digitally saved

²⁵ Such archives include, for instance, National Archives, College Park, MD; Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, Independence, MO; Foreign Ministry Archives of the People's Republic of China, Beijing; Diplomatic Record Office, Tokyo; and National Archives (formerly Public Record Office), Kew.

²⁶ This kind of archives include, for instance, University Archives at the University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA; Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs at the Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI; Tamiment Library & Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at New York University, New York City, NY; Municipal Archives in Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin; Ohara Institute for Social Research at Hosei University, Tokyo; and Working Class Movement Library, Salford.

²⁷ For variety of newspaper collections, I have used the following libraries and archives: Cornell University Olin and Kroch Libraries, Ithaca, NY; British Library Newspaper Reading Room, Colindale; National Library and Peking University Library in Beijing; Northeast Normal University Library and Jilin University Library Archives in Changchun; National Library and National Taiwan University Library in Taipei; Newspaper Reading Room in National Diet Library, Tokyo Metropolitan Library, and University of Tokyo Library in Tokyo; Osaka Prefectural Central Library and Osaka Municipal Library in Osaka.

documents; and the use of relatively inexpensive airline tickets. With the combination of the factors, we can now conduct research with huge amounts of primary materials in an efficient manner. This radical change in research method has made it possible for us to raise new kinds of questions in a new framework, enabling us to go beyond traditional boundaries.

Over the course of my research I have collected, to make a rough division, five categories of primary sources in archives and libraries in multiple societies. These include: articles and cartoons published in local newspapers; ordinary people's letters and telegrams to politicians and local officials; collections of oral histories available in books, online, and in archives; intelligence reports, politicians' observations, and documents pertaining to police investigations concerning rumors and popular attitudes in society; and politicians' and high-ranking governmental officials' correspondence regarding foreign and domestic policymaking. In addition to these primary sources, I have used secondary sources extensively to cover other geographical regions and topics beyond conventional spheres of Cold War studies.

Using such a wide variety of sources, this project seeks to show the interplay between state and non-state actors in the formation of Cold War logic and policy, and, eventually, the Cold War world itself. The inclusion of such "new" sets of actors and factors—along with the primary materials that elucidate them—as parts of analysis has important consequences for how we view the Cold War. These non-traditional sources that I have gathered suggest that everyday people were hardly passive in terms of the practice of Cold War politics, and that the "reality" of the Cold War during this period was, in fact, shaped through interplay between foreign

events and local interpretations, which were constantly mediated by domestic politics, social contexts, and memories of World War II.

Based on these diverse sources, my study explicates interactive relationships among these various actors and factors. In short, such “new” sets of sources imply that studies of the Cold War and international history can no longer be contained either within spheres concentrating on governmental relations, or within the fields examining cultural production and daily lives of everyday people; these subjects are, by nature, inseparable; therefore, studies of them need to be synthesized. That is why I have titled my dissertation “Whispering Gallery”—a metaphor, borrowed from Woodrow Wilson—for the globalized, interconnected world, in which numberless, nameless people participated in whispering, or shouting, their impressions, which political leaders could not ignore.²⁸

The dissertation is organized chronologically and thematically. **Chapter One, “Across Borders,”** examines the issue of *relationality* through tracing a series of unintended repercussions across Japan, China, and the United States in the years between 1946 and 1950—such as the decisive defeat of the New Deal in the 1946 midterm elections in the United States, the beginning of the so-called Reverse Course in Japan, and the escalation of student movements in China. This chapter contends that domestic politics had far-reaching ramifications beyond borders, unintentionally contributing to the formation of Cold War logic. It argues that the

²⁸ Woodrow Wilson, speech in Des Moines in September 1919, quoted in David S. Foglesong, *America's Secret War against Bolshevism: U.S. Intervention in the Russian Civil War, 1917-1920* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 1.

“Cold War” in this period remained a disputable discourse, only one of a number of possible worldviews, due to its fragmented, nebulous, and discursive nature.

Chapter Two, “Local Translation,” looks at historical moments immediately following the outbreak of the Korean War in June and July of 1950, paying attention to the function of *local translation* through investigating ways in which local people in many parts of the world interpreted the meaning of the Korean War based on their own local contexts. It shows how people in different places—such as East Asia, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and the United States—could simultaneously witness the same events regardless of distance, and how they could “understand” the same situation in radically different ways. Examining such processes of local translation, the chapter traces the ways in which diverse understandings of “reality” became dominant in each society in dialogue between ongoing foreign events and local memories of World War II, contributing to the rapid solidification of the Cold War logic and world.

Chapters Three, “Cold War Fantasy,” and Four, “War, Society, Legitimacy,” analyze the interplay between *state and society* in the summer of 1950 through investigating policymaking processes in Washington and Beijing, focusing on the U.S. decision to cross the 38th Parallel northward in October 7, 1950, and China’s decision to enter the Korean War on October 19, 1950, respectively. Both chapters demonstrate that foreign policymaking processes were not isolated from domestic matrices, social politics, and the daily lives of everyday people. They show, rather, that both Washington and Beijing’s foreign policies were less about military

and geopolitical strategy or the Cold War's global struggles, than symbolic politics in attempts to dominate currents of public thought at home and abroad.

Chapter Five, "Politics of Truth Making," looks into the period immediately following China's entry into the Korean War between the fall of 1950 and spring of 1951, tracing the materialization of the Cold War world through examining the politics of *truth-making* in Chinese and American societies—from the implementation of propaganda and mobilization at home to the conduct of military operations on the battlefields. It analyzes how and on what basis a dominant narrative of the East-West confrontation was developed and solidified, arguing for the significant roles played by local preconceptions, namely racial prejudice and historical memories of colonialism in American and Chinese societies, respectively. This chapter maintains that the primary function of state efforts to create "truth" was not necessarily to create consensus or resolve disagreements in society, but to clarify dividing lines between "us" and "them."

Chapters Six, "Between Mobilization and Participation," and **Seven, "Enemy Within Our Gates,"** explore ways in which such disagreements within societies were resolved in many parts of the world all at once during the Korean War period: suppression of counterrevolutionaries in China, the White Terror in Taiwan, the crackdown on "un-Filipino" activities in the Philippines, the Red Purge in Japan, and anti-communist movements in Western societies, such as anti-striking and anti-labor trends in Britain and McCarthyism in the United States. Through close examination of these domestic purges and suppressions that erupted simultaneously circa 1950-51, this chapter describes all as parts of a global

phenomenon, in which local actors utilized the logic of East-West confrontation in domestic social conflicts and culture wars that had emerged in the postwar period, stifling dissent and “*purifying*” society, often choosing particular kinds of “order” and “reality” that lasted for decades to follow. Through highlighting ways in which socio-political struggles were conducted and eventually integrated into the Cold War, these chapters contend that these local conflicts were not so much results of the Cold War as usually discussed, but that each was itself part of the engine, a component, of the Cold War, actually contributing to the realization of a gigantic social construction, with the participation of ordinary people in their own “wars” fought for the sake of social order in each society.

In short, my dissertation aims at challenging the standard narrative of the Cold War that has been largely based on a geopolitical worldview and diplomatic history approach. Instead, through tracing the ways in which a disputable discourse of the Cold War was used in domestic struggles and then ultimately *became* an irrefutable actuality of the postwar world, it intends to demonstrate local and societal construction of the Cold War fantasy and world on a global scale. Through investigating fragmented local struggles that were eventually (and mistakenly) interpreted as parts of the Cold War, this study reveals that the actual divides of the Cold War existed not so much between Eastern and Western states but within each society, with each, in turn, requiring the perpetuation of the imagined reality of the Cold War in order to maintain social and cultural order at home. It was such an ascent of domestic needs and beliefs in the imagined reality of the global Cold War

that made the heterogeneity of realities invisible, and internally functioned to maintain and perpetuate the “real” Cold War for decades to follow.

Before contemplating on such a global implication, however, let us begin our story through looking into a domestic contest on the ground—the midterm elections in the United States in November 1946.

Part I: Epoch of Relationality

Chapter 1: Across Borders

Our present world is one, inexorably one [...]. Our world is one because of the ever closer technological, economic, and sociological interrelation and interdependence of conditions and developments all over the globe. If we create or countenance misery and devastation on a large scale thousands of miles away, this will inevitably, sooner or later, react on conditions at home. The network of interconnections is so complex that it makes it impossible for any politician to foresee the consequences, the chain reactions, of his acts.¹

Erich Kahler, "Foreign Policy Today," (1950)

The 1946 Midterm Election in the United States

On Election Day, November 5, 1946, President Harry S. Truman, after casting his own vote in his hometown, Independence, Missouri, boarded a train headed back for Washington DC. Past midnight, he sat beside the Signal Corps radio, listening to the news reporting the disastrous Democratic defeat. Around 2:15 a.m., the somber-faced president abruptly turned off the radio, and went to bed without any comments to reporters on the coach.² At that very moment, in North Attleboro, Massachusetts, Joseph Martin's small office was jammed with supporters and reporters. Martin, a Republican member of the House of Representative for twenty-one years and minority leader for seven, was not worried about his own twelfth reelection campaign. His victory was assured. Rather, he and his small town supporters were waiting for news of national results. According to a reporter who was in the office that night, the states called Martin's office one by one. Connecticut

¹ Erich Kahler, "Foreign Policy Today," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* Vol. 7 No. 12 (December 1950), 356.

² "Hot Night," *Time*, November 18, 1946, 23.

called. Colorado called. Pennsylvania called. The Republican Headquarters in Washington DC called, too. By 3 a.m., the news was certain: the Republicans had scored overwhelming victories across the United States, which meant Martin would be the next Speaker of the House. Republican-friendly *Time* magazine trumpeted, "He could hear a horse galloping."³ For Republicans, the sound of galloping could be heard everywhere across the country; the party picked up fifty-five seats in the House and thirteen in the Senate, and now counted twenty-five governorships out of forty-eight, including Ohio, Pennsylvania, California, and New York. While their takeover of the House had been widely predicted, Republicans succeeded in capturing both the House and the Senate, which meant control of Congress for the first time since 1932.⁴

The Depression and World War II had prevented many dreams from coming true for a decade and a half. Then, victory in the war seemed to promise a rosier and brighter postwar future. The postwar world should be better and was expected to be, in a phrase of *Life* magazine, "full of air-conditioned peace and electronically controlled plenty."⁵ What GIs and war workers dreamed of was the beginning of a new life, equipped with an electronic iron (\$10), toaster (\$19), portable radio (\$60), dual-temp refrigerator (\$199), General Electric television (\$190), automatic washing machine (\$241), and above all, an automobile, like the Mercury Convertible (\$2,209).⁶ All of this should be set in a new house, and that house should be a place

³ *Newsweek*, November 18, 1946, 36-37; "The Republican Era," *Life*, November 18, 1946, 31-37.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ "Dreams of 1946," *Life*, 25 November 1946, 60.

⁶ The prices of these good are taken from the following sources: "Dreams of 1946," *Life*, 25 November 1946, 60; Scott Derks ed., *Working Americans, 1880-1999 Vol. I: The Working Class* (Lakeville, CT: Grey House Pub., 2000-2010), 309, 333; *Working Americans, Vol. II: The Middle Class*, 298; *Working*

for a new family including, of course, new babies. Nevertheless, real life in the postwar period was not so rosy, and many found that they would have to wait even longer. First and foremost, the average salary for full-time employees was still \$2,473 per year, meaning that just a portable radio cost nearly a third of a month's income.⁷ Much worse, the wartime planning economy was still in place, and many were not happy with continuing shortages, high prices, high taxes, and fixed wages, controlled by the government even though the war had ended more than a year earlier.⁸ One magazine noted that the price of shoes for children reached \$6 to \$7 a pair, which would pinch large families, as would children's clothes at double, or more than double, their prewar prices.⁹

In addition to such economic hardship, the war and its end had brought radical social changes to American society, spurring diverse kinds of social conflicts at home. Most notable was the explosive increase in labor strife (Picture 1). The wartime "no-strike" pledge was past, and the massive waves of strikes had shaken the nation; in 1946 alone, 4,985 strikes took place in the United States, involving 4.6 million workers—a record high in the scale and number of strikes for all of U.S. history.¹⁰ On the one hand, these strikes were embraced and backed by enthusiastic community-wide support, in some cases even spurring general strikes, signaling the labor possibly to be the new power in the postwar period.¹¹ On the other hand,

Americans, Vol. III: The Upper Class, 287; and *Working Americans, Vol. VII: Social Movements*, 310.

⁷ Derks ed., *Working Americans, Vol. II: The Middle Class*, 298-299.

⁸ "Newsgram," *The U.S. News and World Reports*, October 25, 1946, 5-6, 11, and 24-25.

⁹ "Newsgram," *The U.S. News and World Reports*, November 1, 1946, 7.

¹⁰ Jack Metzgar, "The 1945-1946 Strike Wave," and Nicola Pizzolato, "Strikes in the United States Since World War II," in *The Encyclopedia of Strikes in American History* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2009), 222, 226.

¹¹ George Lipsitz, *Rainbow at Midnight: Labor and Culture in the 1940s* (Urbana, IL: University of

these strikes provoked frustration and even resentment. As Elizabeth Fones-Wolf recounts, one business writer pungently wrote that what originally seemed “an inconvenient but more or less harmless series of industrial disputes has now become so widespread and so threatening as to look like nothing less than catastrophic civil war.”¹²

Economic hardship and social unrest of these kind at home spurred popular frustration, playing a key role in bringing about the political shift of the postwar period. Sources of these frustrations were not outside but within the country. During the 1946 election campaigns, candidates were well aware that people were voting their irritations. They observed that voters were in an angry mood over domestic issues, such as shortages, labor strikes, and continuing economic controls by the government.¹³ Domestic issues dominated the campaign, not foreign policy or the US-USSR rivalry. Several magazines, such as the *U.S. News and World Report*, even declared that practically no candidate bothered to discuss foreign policy in 1946.¹⁴ A battle line in the election, thus, was the search for who and what was to blame for these unsatisfactory domestic situations of the postwar period. In the search for a “culprit,” candidates were keenly aware of what was really being criticized: the New Deal.

Illinois Press, 1994), 115-116. Melvyn Dubofsky and Foster Rhea Dulles, *Labor in America: A History* 8th ed. (Wheeling, IL, Harlan Davidson, 2010), 324.

¹² Elizabeth A. Fones-Wolf, *Selling Free Enterprise: The Business Assault on Labor and Liberalism, 1945-60* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 15.

¹³ “Newsgram,” *The U.S. News and World Reports*, October 25, 1946, 5-6, 11, and 24-25.

¹⁴ “Key Issues in 1946 Election: Price Control at Top of List” in *U.S. News and World Report*, October 25, 1946. The magazine observed that interests in foreign policies occurred largely among Americans of foreign background, such as Poles, Germans, and Jews, “who are concerned over the turn of events in Europe.” Also, see “Daily Summary of Opinion Developments (hereafter DSOD),” October 31, 1946, Box 3: “Daily Summary of International Topics and Foreign Policy, 1946-1948,” Office of Public Opinion Studies, 1943-1965 (hereafter OPOS), Department of State, RG59, National Archives, College Park, MD (hereafter NA);

In constructing images of the New Deal as a major suspect for unsatisfactory postwar situations, experiences and memories of World War II weighed heavily. Throughout the early 1940s, motivations behind New Deal policies had been weakened for a number of reasons. First and foremost, the war simply created tens of thousands of jobs. Furthermore, during wartime, reform-oriented New Deal policies in general—ranging from labor laws and anti-trust laws, to child labor laws—came to be seen as obstacles to the war effort. As historian Richard Polenberg discusses, during World War II, popular sentiment maintained critical views toward New Deal policies: Reform and liberal principles were of secondary importance when what mattered was national defense.¹⁵ In such context, even a liberal magazine like *The New Republic* did not hesitate to urge labor unions to turn away from their own immediate interests and look instead at national interests.¹⁶

Such a war-fostered image of “selfish” unions protected by New Deal laws lingered in the postwar period. At the peak of the Railroad Strike in May 1946, President Truman, for instance, castigated the strikers for “plac[ing] their private interests above the welfare of the nation.”¹⁷ Learning that the workers nevertheless went on strike that night, Truman became furious and wrote a speech draft. Although the draft was not used, it portrayed the image of “selfish” unions that was shaped in the wartime and remained in the postwar years. He wrote:

Every single one of the strikes and their demigog [sic] leaders have been living in luxury, working when they pleased and drawing from four to forty times the pay of a fighting soldier. [...]. Let's give the country back to the people. Let's put

¹⁵ Richard Polenberg, *War and Society: The United States, 1941-1945* (New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1972), 76-79.

¹⁶ Polenberg, *War and Society*, 92-93.

¹⁷ Eric F. Goldman, *The Crucial Decade-And After: America, 1945-1960*, 2nd ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1960 [1956]), 23-24.

transportation and production back to work, hang a few traitors, and make our country safe for democracy.¹⁸

Truman's draft surely exaggerated workers' economic status. Yet, the fact that industrial labors in the postwar period actually had the highest real wages and relatively better working conditions lent credibility to such a description of "selfish" strikers. For example, railroad workers' and coal mining workers' total yearly incomes in 1946 were \$3,055 and \$2,724, respectively, while public school teachers averaged \$2,025, medical service workers (mainly nurses) \$1,605, domestic workers \$1,411, farm labor \$1,394, and fishery workers \$1,200.¹⁹

Furthermore, the massive wave of strikes all over the country that year, which ended with an astonishing general strike in Oakland, California, indeed backfired for labor, making it more believable that labor activism would be "selfish." When Oakland went on what was called "labor holiday" and the city lost control, the mayor, Herbert Beach, criticized the strike as an attempt "to push aside the government created by all the people" and "to substitute the physical force of mobs for that government."²⁰ Even labor leaders were upset; one labor leader demanded members of his union back to work because the Oakland strike appeared to him "nothing but a revolution." "It isn't labor tactics. It's revolutionary tactics," he added.²¹ Quite a few shared such a view. One New Jersey veteran wrote to *Life*: "So these are the ungrateful so-and-sos that we went out and fought a war for and our

¹⁸ Clark Clifford, "Serving the President: The Truman Years (1)," *New Yorker*, March 25, 1991, 54-55. Quoted in James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945-1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 48.

¹⁹ Derks ed., *Working Americans, Vol. II: The Middle Class*, 298-299; Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 44.

²⁰ Lipsitz, *Rainbow at Midnight*, 150.

²¹ *Ibid.*

shipmates and comrades died for! Oakland should hang its head in shame.”²² A Chicago man wrote in a similar tone: “It made me sick to my stomach to see the stupidity and brutality shown in these strikers. They should be given a compulsory course in American history so that they would have a better appreciation of the principles and ideals behind the system they are endangering by their unthinking acts.”²³

It is not difficult to sense the lasting influence of war mentalities in these statements and letters. As in many other countries, the war had its own mechanism to produce ideal national images in regard to the past, future, and lofty purposes. Throughout the wartime period, Americans were told that they were “on the side of the Right.”²⁴ Such emphasis was necessary to carry out the war, and ask individuals to sacrifice their own lives. If the war was lost, as in the case of Japan, such idealistic discourses of “justice” were simply discarded and disdained, and people tended to behave as if they had been deceived and lacked any choice before the war. When the war was won, on the other hand, what should one say to the war dead? The answer was: It was a just war and America was and would be on the right side.

Therefore, these ideal images of America, whether they fit into a realistic picture of the society or not, should have come true under an idealized version of alleged “consensus,” and any doubt or disagreement was considered shameless and ignorant, and in need of correction. If there is no room for such correction, it is simply necessary to “hang a few traitors” to make the country “safe for democracy.”

²² Letter, Lloyd F. Kerr, “Letters to the Editor,” *Life*, January 6, 1947, 4.

²³ Letter, William Goodwin, “Letters to the Editor,” *Life*, January 6, 1947, 3-4.

²⁴ Polenberg, *War and Society*, 244.

The logic of such discourses typically maintained that “Americans” would not criticize “our” own society and institutions if they were really “American.” If some did it anyway, “they” must be outsiders—perhaps, communists.

In this way, as the victory in World War II brought confirmation to ever growing-up nationalism in the United States, those who raised objections began to be fingered as “un-American” and “communists” and, by the same token, New Deal policies and labor unions’ activities were increasingly described as such. In such a process, it is no wonder that labor activism had been increasingly identified with the results of communist infiltration. Asked about the labor strikes of 1946, a woman responded: “I believe [Russia] is spreading communism here in the United States. [...]. She is doing it through secret channels. She is approaching us in fields where we are not the brightest, like unions where there are not too many thinking people, if any.”²⁵ The result of such mounting anti-labor frustration and resentment was the enactment of the Taft-Hartley Act in 1947.

That is to say, the labor activism that flourished in 1945-1946 did not suddenly dry up as a result of the Republican victory in the 1946 midterm elections, nor was it destined to decline. Nor did the Taft-Hartley Act all of a sudden dispirit workers and activists. On the contrary, the proposal of the law itself sparked waves of protest demonstrations in several states, and the enactment of the law likewise touched off unauthorized walkouts of coal miners, paralyzing coal production. As historian George Lipsitz observes, in the late-1940s, rank-and-file workers still

²⁵ “Public Attitudes Toward Russia and United State-Russian Relations, Part II: Attitudes and Beliefs About Russia,” April 1947, Box 40, “Survey Reports 1947-50,” Division of Public Studies, Bureau of Public Affairs, Department of State, RG59, NA. This research was conducted by the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan between 9 December 1946 and 11 January 1947.

remained as willing to strike as they were in 1946. In addition to such a “wildcat” tactics, some labor leaders and unions took another strategy, shifting their primary battlefield from the shop floor to the political arena—elections.

Gearing up for the 1948 presidential elections, they worked with either Democrats or Progressives, hoping to elect a friendly congress and administration in Washington. This explains why, in the United States, “anti-communist” calls developed more in response to domestic political and election issues than international affairs. The more labor unions became politicized, the more “anti-communist” logic grew in local politics. In fact, “anti-communist” issues in the United States heated up, first, in the areas where New Dealers and labor activists had been energetic in politics, such as California, Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan, and Idaho, as candidates in these locations used “anti-communist” logic as a political strategy to castigate New Deal reform-oriented policies and labor activism.²⁶

Still more interesting, the development of “anti-communist” campaigns overlapped with attacks on African Americans, civil rights activists, feminists, immigrants, gays and lesbians, and advocates for national health care, all of who brought social changes to postwar America in many ways, as radical workers did in their struggles.²⁷ The roughly three million African Americans who poured into

²⁶ “Key Issues in 1946 Election: Price Control at Top of List,” *The U.S. News and World Reports*, October 25, 1946, 25.

²⁷ The literature in these topics is increasingly numerous in recent years. See, for example, Carol Anderson, *Eyes Off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Jeff Woods, *Black Struggle, Red Scare: Segregation and Anti-communism in the South, 1948-1968* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University, 2004); Shelton Stromquist, *Labor's Cold War: Local Politics in a Global Context* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2008); David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004); John D'Emilio, “The Homosexual Menace: The Politics of Sexuality in Cold War America,” in Kathy Lee Peiss,

northern cities during wartime, as well as the million of women who took over traditionally male jobs at that time, posed seeds of new social conflicts and culture wars in the postwar era, bringing dreams and hopes to many, while triggering frustration and resentment for others. As we will examine in a later chapter, “anti-communist” logic in the United States was adopted and spread to contain these social “problems” in a manner similar to that employed in curbing radical labor activism.

This version of “anti-communism” was concerned less with international affairs than with anything deemed “un-American”—anything not typical in society at that time—which came to surface as aftereffects of radical social, cultural, and political transformations that became visible through the Great Depression and World War II. The “anti-communist” logic in postwar America, in other words, became popular as method to solve—or suppress—social “problems” in the name of global affairs. To put it plainly, it was the use of nationalism to overcome social conflicts and to bring a “conflict-free” and “harmonious” society at home. Seen in such a context, the development of “anti-communist” sentiments in the United States was not necessarily a result of international situations but had its own domestic roots.

It is no wonder that “anti-communist” issues first heated up among local politicians and in the House of Representatives, rather than in the Senate or White House. When the new 80th Congress met in early-January 1947, Republican

Christina Simmons, and Robert A Padgug eds., *Passion and Power: Sexuality in History* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), 226-240; and Don Parson, “The Decline of Public Housing and the Politics of the Red Scare,” *Journal of Urban History*, 33, no. 3 (2007): 400-417.

congressmen such as Fred Busbey of Illinois and Paul Shafer and Bartel Jonkman of Michigan jumped on anti-New Deal and anti-communist issues, calling for investigations of the State Department, Justice Department, and Chambers of Commerce, all of which had expanded through the New Deal and wartime periods, and all of which had been rumored to house large numbers of communists.²⁸ Their stance was understandable, particularly in view of the popularity of “anti-communist” calls in Michigan and Illinois where labor strife had been fierce. Moreover, it was received well among Eastern European voters in these states.²⁹ Representative Shafer, who had been an editor and publisher of local newspapers in Michigan urged Secretary of State George Marshall to “clean house of the Communists, one-worlders and multimillionaire playboy diplomats who have been using American funds indirectly to increase their family fortune.”³⁰ As the atmosphere in the House turned restive, Republican-friendly *Life* magazine in March 1947 published names and pictures of thirty individuals suspected of being “communist sympathizers,” most of them simply involved in labor activism.³¹

In an effort to deflect such censure at home, President Truman quickly announced two “anti-communist” initiatives in March 1947: the Federal Employee Loyalty Program and the Truman Doctrine, both of which now often believed as parts, or even as origins, of Truman’s Cold War strategy. The implementation of both programs, however, had more to do with domestic political considerations

²⁸ “DSOD,” January 27 and 29, 1947, Box 3, OPOS, RG59, NA.

²⁹ James T. Selcraig, *The Red Scare in the Midwest, 1945-1955: A State and Local Study* (Ann Arbor, 1982).

³⁰ “DSOD,” January 17, 1947, Box 3, OPOS, RG59, NA; See also “DSOD,” January 27, 1947, Box 3, OPOS, RG59, NA.

³¹ “The Infiltration Corps: Communists and Their Friends Hold Some Key Posts,” *Life*, March 24, 1947, 34-45.

than international conflict. Concerning the Loyalty Program, Clark Clifford, one of Truman's key advisers, recollected:

It was a political problem. We did not believe there was a real problem. A problem was being manufactured. [...]. We gave a good deal of thought to how to respond. We had a presidential campaign ahead of us and here was a great issue, a very damaging issue, so he set up this whole kind of machinery.³²

As Clifford recalls, the Truman administration set up the mechanism of the Loyalty Program not because it perceived actual security risks in the government but because it saw political opportunities in the wake of the decisive defeat of Democratic Party in November 1950.³³ In effect, it was part of long-term election campaigns, not of Cold War strategy. A similar consideration worked when the administration prepared for the program calling for immediate economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey—known as the Truman Doctrine. The popularity of “anti-communism” among a broad range of Americans had convinced the president of its usefulness as political tool, as historians Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall write, “even if it had little to do with what was happening in Greece and Turkey.”³⁴

At this point, however, the consensus over the reality of the Cold War—written and conceived in capital letters as an obvious historical epoch—did not exist, and variety of futures seemed possible. The public was still widely divided over the president's statement. According to opinion polls taken by the Gallup Poll and the

³² Carl Bernstein, *Loyalties: A Son's Memoir* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989), 198, 200. Quoted from Ellen Schrecker, “McCarthyism: Political Repression and the Fear of Communism,” *Social Research* Vol. 71, No 3 (2004), 1046-1047.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall, *America's Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), 80. For details of American intervention in Greece, Howard Jones, *“A New Kind of War”: America's Global Strategy and the Truman Doctrine in Greece* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

Public Opinion Quarterly, while the large majority of those who polled approved economic aid to Greece, more than half actually disagreed with sending military advisers to train the Greek army.³⁵ Not surprisingly, many could openly critique the president's announcement. The world of the Cold War remained one of number of opinions, not yet a "reality," since it had not been known or shared widely. While the 1946 midterm election certainly highlighted the anti-New Deal and anti-communist trend in postwar American society, to which the Truman administration deftly reacted, it also stirred up controversy and disagreement.

Nonetheless, such intense debate and such a fluid political situation in the United States had unintended repercussions beyond its borders, such as in Japan.

U.S. Occupation of Japan and the Beginning of the Climate of Red-Baiting

The American occupation of Japan began in September of 1945, and the conduct of the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Tokyo under the control of the Supreme Commander of Allied Powers (SCAP)—that is, General Douglas MacArthur—had not created much significant controversy until early 1946. The situation changed as the rise in popularity of Marxist agendas and labor activism became apparent in postwar Japan.³⁶ As a matter of fact, leftist agendas had

³⁵ According to Gallup Poll, 75 percent approved and 25 percent disapproved President's program. According to *Public Opinion Quarterly's* polls, 56 percent approved and 32 percent disapproved of the Truman Doctrine, and 33 percent approved and 54 percent disapproved sending U.S. military advisers to train the Greek royalist army. See "Aid to Greece," *The Gallup Poll*, Vol. 1, April 4, 1947, 636; and Athan Theoharis, *Seeds of Repression: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of McCarthyism* (Chicago, IL: Quadrangle, 1971), 197.

³⁶ The term "SCAP" originally meant the title held by MacArthur. However, from the time of the U.S. occupation, the word "SCAP" was used to refer the offices of the occupation, including both civilians and military personnel, and thus I follow this custom. In this chapter I use the both terms "SCAP" and "GHQ" interchangeably.

overwhelming support; labor union membership quickly surpassed its prewar peak of 400,000 by the end of 1945, and reached nearly 5 million by December 1946.³⁷ Observing this rapid change in society, economist Arisawa Hiromi wrote in his diary on October 13, 1945, “Having heard everyone’s story, I felt that all intellectuals, journalists, politicians, either right wing or left wing, today look toward the Left, making a rush for more and more left. In such a tide of the time, where should I stand? What to say?”³⁸

Such a “left-turn” was obvious even to the United States, and, as criticism toward the New Deal and alleged communist activities increased in the United States around the 1946 midterm elections, American observers began problematizing this “left-turn” in Japan under the U.S. occupation. For many observers, the sudden development of labor unionism and the rapid spread of leftist influences could not be explained without thinking of either Soviet expansion into East Asia or communist infiltration within the SCAP.³⁹

However, a much more fundamental element in the popularity of leftist thoughts in postwar Japan was, rather, memories of World War II for the Japanese people. First, during the war, only one group maintained opposition to the war—the

³⁷ Howard Schonberger, *Aftermath of War: Americans and the Remaking of Japan, 1945-1952* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1989), 115; Andrew Gordon, *The Wages of Affluence: Labor and Management in Postwar Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 8. Also, see Joe Moore, *Japanese Workers and the Struggle for Power, 1945-1947* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983).

³⁸ Nakamura Takafusa, *Showa-shi [A History of Showa] Vol. 2: 1945-1989* (Tokyo: Toyo keizai, 1993), 393.

³⁹ See, for instance, letter, Roy Howard to Douglas MacArthur, January 31, 1946, Papers of Bonner F. Fellers (hereafter PBFF), Folder 2, Box 3, RG44a, MacArthur Memorial Archives, Norfolk, VA (hereafter MMA); letter, Norman Thomas to Bonner F. Fellers, May 7, 1946, PBFF, Folder 1, Box 5, RG44a, MMA. Also, see *Life*, December 2, 1946 and *Newsweek*, January 23, 1947. *Newsweek*, in particular, heated up criticism through the years of 1947-1948. For the study of the “Japan Lobby,” gathered around the *Newsweek* magazine, see Schonberger, *Aftermath of War*, 134-160.

Japanese Communist Party (JCP). This simple reality gave the JCP the ethical high ground after Japan's defeat. In addition, the fact that hundreds of Japanese communists stuck to their anti-war beliefs, despite harsh suppression, imprisonment, and, in many cases, torture throughout the war, made them appear like martyrs or saints in the postwar period.⁴⁰ This was particularly the case for intellectuals, who surrendered their opinions in the wartime and cooperated in support of the war, and who felt a deep sense of remorse afterwards. For many, the communists' uncompromising attitudes toward the war appeared as a symbol of "true" independence of mind—in the buzzwords of the time, a proof of subjectivity.⁴¹ Furthermore, Marxist claims to a "scientific" approach to history and social problems appealed widely to people who were fed up with wartime spiritualism.⁴²

Broad support for leftist agendas in early postwar Japan, therefore, was not necessarily a result of the spread of Moscow's influence; rather, it was locally adapted in order to express local feelings—regret, irritation, and anger—about the war, and was utilized to compensate for unfilled desires for "subjectivity" during the war. As historian Oguma Eiji suggests, it is no exaggeration to say that all phenomena in postwar Japan grew in dialogue with wartime experience, remorse, and shame. In other words, many contemporary Japanese creatively (or mistakenly) translated and developed leftist agendas in dialogue with their own war experiences.

⁴⁰ Oguma Eiji, *"Minshu" to "Aikoku": Sengo Nihon no nashonarishumu to kokyosei* (Tokyo: Shinyosha, 2002), 175-186.

⁴¹ For more detailed discussion on the discourse of "subjectivity," see J. Victor Koschmann, *Revolution and Subjectivity in Postwar Japan* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

⁴² Ibid.

A similar mechanism functioned in reinterpreting terms like “democracy”—a term known to many Japanese people since the late nineteenth century but re-introduced and popularized in the postwar period as a way to critique wartime values.⁴³ Through the local translation, the notion of democracy did not conflict with a Marxist agenda; both were adopted to critique wartime values. Such an indigenous blend of interpretations clearly appeared at a May Day demonstration in 1946 (Picture 2). Among a “sea of red flags” with half a million men, women, and children gathered in front of the imperial palace in Tokyo, one participant explained why he attended the rally: “Because I believe that, in a democracy, power should belong to the people”.⁴⁴ On that day, demonstrators’ primary demands were, as a young SCAP official observed, directly related to their daily life issues, such as food shortages and high prices, not so much ideological.⁴⁵

Such voices, feelings, and specific demands faded away when viewed from the United States. Although reports on Japan’s nationwide May Day demonstrations quickly appeared in newspapers and on radio shows, what dominated discourse in the American media was the “expanding role of Communism in Japan.”⁴⁶ In fact, when American news covered May Day demonstrations in Japan, participants’ voices, subjective feelings, connotations, and local issues, were not conveyed.

Several commentators rather wondered whether or not “in the nurturing of the

⁴³ For the tremendous popularity of “democracy” in the postwar period, see, for instance, John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999).

⁴⁴ Mark Gayn, *Japan Diary 1945-1948* (New York: William Sloane Association, 1948), 196-198; Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 259-63.

⁴⁵ Thomas A. Bisson, *Nihon senryo kaiso ki* [A Memoir of Occupation of Japan], Nakamura Masanori and Miura Yoichi trans. (Tokyo: Sanseido, 1983), May 1, 1946, 74-75. Bisson’s diary was published only in Japanese.

⁴⁶ “Japan and Korea, No. 8,” June 18, 1946, Box 39, “Public Opinion on Foreign Countries and Regions, Japan and Korea, 1945-54,” OPOS, RG 59, NA.

Japanese labor movements” the American occupation had “bred something in the nature of a Frankensteinian monster.”⁴⁷ Meanwhile, William Seabald, U.S. Ambassador to Japan, similarly got wind of rumors in Tokyo to the effect that a large number of communists and leftists were active inside the General Headquarters under the guardianship of SCAP officials.⁴⁸

Rumors of this kind in Japan and the United States supplied a tailwind for bolstering a red-baiting mood in the SCAP. “The newspapers are full of the anti-Communist investigation and purges now going on in the States, especially in Congress,” wrote Charles Willoughby, Chief of the Military Intelligent Section—known as G2—in the General Headquarters in Tokyo. “This is as good a time, psychologically to revive our own situation”⁴⁹ Born in Heidelberg, Germany, immigrating to the United States when he was sixteen and growing up into a military officer, Willoughby described himself as a zealot of American values. He later recalled that he has absolute trust in the justice and truth of America and considered so-called progressives, liberals, and communist sympathizers who criticized America his enemies. “On this point I do not yield an inch,” emphasized Willoughby.⁵⁰ Not surprisingly, the SCAP’s initial reform-oriented policies looked like to him a result of communist manipulation, and, thus, in early 1947, when the “anti-communist” mood was growing in the United States, he found a chance to revive a critique of alleged leftist influence in the General Headquarters.

⁴⁷ Ibid; “Japan and Korea, No. 17,” March 11, 1947, Box 39, OPOS, RG59, NA.

⁴⁸ William J. Seabald, *Nihon senryo gaiko no kaiso* [*Memoir of Japanese Occupation Diplomacy*] (Tokyo: Asahi shinbun, 1966), 40.

⁴⁹ Correspondence, Charles A. Willoughby to G2 Staffs, February 9, 1947, Papers of Charles A. Willoughby (hereafter PCAW), Folder 3, Box 18, RG 23, MMA.

⁵⁰ Charles A. Willoughby, *Shirarezaru Nihon senryo: Wirobi kaikoroku* [Occupation of Japan Unknown: Memoir of Willoughby] (Tokyo: Bancho shobo, 1973), 136-37.

It was a chance precisely because Willoughby and his staff's earlier effort had not been so successful. The first short 28-page report, "Leftist Classification of Civilian Employees" did not capture much attention in September of 1946. However, their tireless efforts eventually bore fruit with the retreat of the New Deal in the midterm elections in the United States, a sea change that made his section's intelligence report trendier and thicker. The second-revised version of this report raised its tone with a new title, "Leftist Influence in Headquarters." Then, at the end of February 1947, a new third-revised version, a 110-page study, appeared with a more eye-catching title, "Leftist Infiltration into SCAP." Willoughby's correspondence during this period shows his unusual zeal bordering on paranoia. In drawing up a revised version of older studies that listed nine suspects, Willoughby did not hesitate to order some "facts" to be made up. He even wrote, "I am disappointed in the small number of cases. I thought there were 21. We might as well list the other 'suspects' as being under investigation."⁵¹

In addition to a political tailwind from the United States, as well as the excessive zeal of Willoughby and his staff, General Douglas MacArthur's opportunistic attitudes helped to foster the red-baiting mood in the GHQ. As his close aides observed, MacArthur did not see the growing popularity of leftist thoughts as a threat to Japan at all, and in fact stated that the rise of labor unions in Japan was a favorable sign of a "liberal trend," not a dangerous swing to the left as American observers described.⁵² Then, a couple of questions arise: Why did

⁵¹ Correspondence, Willoughby to his staffs, February 20, 1947, PCAW, Folder 3, Box 18, RG23, MMA.

⁵² Roger Baldwin, "The Reminiscences of Roger Baldwin, Occupation of Japan," 27, Oral History Collection (hereafter OHC), Columbia University, New York City, NY.

MacArthur, originally an ultra-conservative and anti-communist, eagerly encourage “liberal” trends in postwar Japan, particularly before 1947? Why did MacArthur not actively try to prevent red hunting in the SCAP after the fall of 1946, if he did not see any communist threat? A key to explaining his capricious attitudes is his sensitivity concerning his own public image in the United States. As American Ambassador William Seabald observed, the general was highly concerned with how he was viewed, and extremely sensitive to any sort of criticism.⁵³ In line with this, it made sense for him to support New Deal type policies in the early period of the occupation, as he believed that such policies were still popular in the United States. Thus, after seeing the defeat of New Deal and loss of popularity of labor activism in the 1946 midterm elections, he had no reason to stick with such reform-oriented policies.

Such was particularly the case in the period between November 1946 and February 1947. The landslide victory of the Republican Party in the midterm elections confirmed for many people that the next president would be a Republican, and that MacArthur would be a formidable candidate. In November 1946, in fact, he began receiving letters and telegrams from supporters, ranging from ordinary people to ex-president Herbert Hoover, many of whom had backed his unsuccessful candidacy in the 1944 presidential election.⁵⁴ These supporters now advised MacArthur to return to the United States and give a few talks in order to stir up the morale of the country. One Chicago man wrote to the General, informing him that he

⁵³ According to Seabald, MacArthur even ordered subordinates to make a counterargument when a Shanghai newspaper criticized him. Seabald thought MacArthur was “oversensitive.” Seabald, *Nihon senryo gaiko no kaiso [Memoir of Japanese Occupation Diplomacy]*, 94; Also, see, for instance, Michael Schaller, *Douglas MacArthur: The Far Eastern General* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989) and Sodei Rinjiro, *MacArthur no nisennichi [MacArthur’s Two Thousands Days]* (Tokyo: Chuo koron, 1976).

⁵⁴ These letters can be seen in large quantity in Papers of Douglas MacArthur (hereafter PDM), Personal Correspondence, Box 12 (July-December 1946), RG10, MMA.

already began the “Draft MacArthur Movement.” Likewise, a woman in Oregon confessed that, when she was praying, God gave her a vision of Christ, standing by MacArthur’s side, saying, “He is my man. [...]. I will stand beside him all the way.”⁵⁵ No less confident than this woman, MacArthur himself strongly believed that he could be the next president. Thus, he wanted to know which way the wind was blowing in the United States, which the 1946 midterm election returns showed him, making his judgments on the course of U.S. occupation policy more capricious.⁵⁶ It was no wonder that MacArthur ordered the cancellation of a planned general strike in Japan in January 1947 after observing the election result and the backlash against the Oakland general strike in December 1946. It was blindingly obvious that he would be harshly attacked in his homeland if he did not stop it.

As various headwinds combined—from the defeat of the New Deal in the midterm elections and the rapid increase of negative reports on the SCAP in the American media, to the escalation of red-hunting within the General Headquarters, as well as MacArthur’s opportunistic attitude—it was no wonder that the SCAP’s young officials who had been promoting radical reform programs in Japan, and began to be criticized as “New Dealers,” gradually lost confidence in their reform programs. Theodore Cohen, a chief of a labor division in the SCAP, recalled the meaning of the 1946 midterm election: “Labor was rejected. Business was in the saddle.” A graduate of Columbia University, where he specialized in Japanese labor

⁵⁵ Letter, Joseph Savage to Douglas MacArthur, December 16, 1946; Letter, Nellie Gordon Curtis to MacArthur, December 14, 1946, PDM, Box 12, RG10, MMA.

⁵⁶ Letter, Woodall Green to Bonner F. Fellers, April 26, 1947, PBFF, Folder 12, Box 2, RG44a, MMA. In this letter, MacArthur’s aide Colonel Green suggested that it would be important for Fellers to keep MacArthur posted on public opinion in the United States.

history, and an enthusiastic supporter of New Deal policies, Cohen discerned that “Reforms and reformers lost prestige and even respectability, while many of the Headquarters brass cozied up to GHQ civilians with big business connections.”⁵⁷

Meanwhile, word spread among SCAP officials in Tokyo that getting jobs upon returning to Washington was becoming increasingly difficult, as they were labeled “too New Dealish” or even “communistic.”⁵⁸ One ex-SCAP member, looking for a job in Washington in the spring of 1948, for instance, found that his work experience at GHQ aroused “much hostility.”⁵⁹ The case of Andrew Grajdanzv (Grad) was even worse. Born in Siberia and spending almost all of his life in Harbin and Tianjin before coming to the United States in late 1930s, Grad was Willoughby’s number one target, and had been placed under strict surveillance in 1946. He was tailed, his room was secretly searched, and his letters were read, while there was no significant evidence that he had done anything wrong. A three-week counter-intelligence investigation found that he tended to eat by himself, stay at home, and visit the same places frequently. This last behavior did attract an investigator’s interest, but it turned out that he was regularly learning Japanese while teaching English.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, when he returned to the United States, he could not get a job in the governmental sector at all, due to rumors and attacks, despite his work experience in the SCAP and a Ph.D. in economics and fluency in Russian, Japanese,

⁵⁷ Theodore Cohen, *Remaking Japan* (New York: Free Press, 1987), 309-11.

⁵⁸ Bisson, *Nihon senryo kaiso ki [A Memoir of Occupation of Japan]*, January 20, 1947, 170.

⁵⁹ Michael Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan: The Origins of the Cold war in Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 131.

⁶⁰ “Memorandum for Information,” September 23, 1946, PCAW, Box 18, RG23, MMA.

Chinese, and English. Eventually he studied library science, starting over completely, and got a job at a small local library.⁶¹

Hearing of such experiences, many reformers simply became too discouraged to continue with their programs.⁶² Many staff members decided to leave the SCAP in 1947. One GS staff member, asked decades later if that atmosphere had any influence on him, said: “I think I became less enthusiastic about going on in the field [...]. [The climate] dampened my interest. I realized that you could not say just anything you wanted to. If you wanted to continue your career, you could not.”⁶³ Still in their thirties, talented and ambitious, many young SCAP officials wanted to return to and continue their careers in the United States.⁶⁴ As such, their choices were limited, and many compromised to reduce the tone of liberal reforms, adapting to the newly emerging political trend. SCAP officials’ memoirs suggest that changes in day-to-day office policies were effects of their own fears and adaptations between the spring of 1946 and 1947, a trend that accelerated following the 1946 midterm elections. These adaptations were not organized moves but made up of their own conscious and unconscious daily practices. This point sheds new light on the shift in U.S. occupation policy for Japan—commonly known as the “Reverse Course,” assumed to have taken place in the years between late-1948 and 1950.

⁶¹ Joseph Gordon, “The Reminiscences of Joseph Gordon, Occupation of Japan,” 84, OHC, Columbia University; Beate Gordon, “The Reminiscences of Beate Gordon, Occupation of Japan,” 166, OHC, Columbia University.

⁶² Cohen, *Remaking Japan*, 310. Theodore Cohen noted that even vocabularies changed in his workplace.

⁶³ Joseph Gordon, “The Reminiscences of Joseph Gordon, Occupation of Japan,” 208, OHC, Columbia University.

⁶⁴ See SCAP members’ memoirs, such as, Bisson, *Nihon senryo kaiso ki* [*A Memoir of Occupation of Japan*].

Local Politics of the “Reverse Course”

Conventionally, the so-called “Reverse Course”—from the policy of reforming Japanese society to that of restoring the Japanese economy—has been explained as resulting from the escalation of the Cold War. This explanation maintains that, because the Cold War developed in Europe, Washington decided to take a tougher stance all over the world, including East Asia, thus abolishing various reform-oriented policies and focusing more on rehabilitating the Japanese economy to use Japan as a fortress in East Asia against the threat of Soviet expansion. This popular view maintains that MacArthur opposed such a shift, but decisions made in Washington overrode the GHQ. The controllers, according to this narrative, were grand strategists in the State Department, such as George F. Kennan and Walton W. Butterworth, who took new positions in the summer of 1947 as Director of the Policy Planning Staff and Head of the Far East Division, respectively, and began talking about developing Japan as a buffer state in East Asia.

In fact, in October 1948, Kennan wrote the NSC-13, officially recommending changes in U.S. occupation policy for Japan, a document that often seen as the origin of the Reverse Course in Japan. The diplomat later recollected this proposal as his “most constructive contribution,” continuing in a self-congratulatory tone, “On no other occasion, (except the Marshall Plan), did I ever make recommendations of such scope and import; and on no other occasion did my recommendations meet with such wide, indeed almost complete, acceptance.”⁶⁵ Emphasizing the unity and consistency of state power and high-ranking policymakers, and showing a

⁶⁵ For policymakers’ side of the “Reverse Course,” see Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan*, 104; and George F. Kennan, *Memoir 1925-1950* (New York: Pantheon, 1967), 368-96.

seemingly clear and coherent image of the world situation, the story of the “Reverse Course originating from Washington’s Cold War strategy” has since become the dominant narrative in Japan and the United States.⁶⁶

Nevertheless, looking more closely, such a conventional model is inadequate to explain the phenomenon known as Reverse Course. First, the shift in tones of occupation policies began well before Washington explicated its policy in the fall of 1948.⁶⁷ As we have examined, changes in policies had already occurred in the summer of 1946 in a more bottom-up and fragmented way, as many SCAP officials personally adapted to the new political climate in the United States. In fact, Theodore Cohen, who worked in the GHQ between 1946 and 1950, recalled that there was nothing like a situation in which the GHQ changed its occupation policy because of the escalation of the Cold War, adding that such a scenario was too simplistic.⁶⁸ Furthermore, on the politicians’ level beyond bureaucrats’ discussions, the change in U.S. occupation policy for Japan was contemplated and adopted in 1948, not for the purpose of Cold War grand strategy, but for that of “trimming the budget” and “protecting American taxpayers.”⁶⁹ Needless to say, such emphasis on taxpayers came to surface in line with popular anti-New Deal sentiments at that time, and, most importantly, with the 1948 presidential election.

⁶⁶ Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan*; and Schonberger, *Aftermath of War*; John W. Dower, *Empire and Aftermath: Yoshida Shigeru and the Japanese Experience, 1878-1954* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979).

⁶⁷ A number of liberal magazines and reporters, such as *Amerasia*, *The Nation*, and Mark Gayn, for instance, began criticizing a “sharp change” in U.S. occupation policy in the summer and fall of 1946. “Japan and Korea, No. 12,” November 12, 1946, Box 39, OPOS, RG 59, NA.

⁶⁸ Cohen, *Remaking Japan*, 125.

⁶⁹ Schonberger, *Aftermath of War*, 134-160, 161-197.

In a sense, domestic-political considerations were particularly important in terms of supporting the notion of rehabilitating Japan's economy. In fact, the idea of shifting U.S. occupation policy for Japan had been widely discussed and had been popular among American newspapers and magazines since the summer and fall of 1946, such as the *Philadelphia Inquirer* which endorsed the idea in September 1946.⁷⁰ In this election period, particularly those of Republican-leaned newspapers took on strident tones, criticizing the Department of State for allowing "New Dealish" policies in Japan, and demanding a shift in occupation policy well before bureaucrats formulated such policy. Seen in this way, Washington's policymakers actually followed and endorsed what was already growing, rather than originating it as part of Cold War strategy.

As such, the role of so-called "grand strategy" of reversing U.S. policy for Japan, supposed to be thought up among few top elite officials in the Department of State, seems less vital than usually described. To be sure, a number of State Department officials worked out to modify the direction of occupation policy in the years around 1948-1949, producing significant changes in American policy toward Japan. Yet, such is still only one of many diverse and fragmented factors, which, in many different ways, contributed to the phenomenon of the Reverse Course. Those include, for instance, personal adaptation, domestic politics, popular attitudes, and the political climate at that time. Examination of these diverse elements that shaped the Reverse Course is important for it clarifies the imaginary and constitutive nature of the Cold War which is commonly believed to have been essential to the Reverse

⁷⁰ "Japan and Korea, No. 11," October 10, 1946; "Japan and Korea, No. 10," September 5, 1946, Box 39, OPOS, RG 59, NA.

Course. Simply looking at the American side, the shift in U.S. policies seems more personal, fragmented, and domestic-political, than strategic, systematic, and Cold War oriented. In addition to the American side, however, there were much more fundamental factors in the shift of U.S. occupation policies—the Japanese elements.

When we look at Japanese agency in the dynamics of the Reverse Course, the story of that phenomenon seems much more complicated.⁷¹ In its local context, the Reverse Course can be seen as reflection of social politics of emerging grassroots conservatives in postwar Japan. It was a struggle between two radically different versions of “reality”—that is, contingent and continuous. One “reality” was that a large number of the Japanese people, particularly the young and urban, enthusiastically embraced postwar reforms following the end of World War II. As historian John Dower points out, many Japanese raised doubts about established orders and values, welcoming radical changes and reforms.⁷² Nonetheless, for many, particularly the elderly and rural, who made up the majority at that time, early postwar reforms looked abnormal, and the Reverse Course appeared a return to “normalcy.” In other words, the development of the Reverse Course can be seen as a process of local translation—in terms of creative interpretation in locals’ own language—of foreign influences into Japanese contexts. In that sense, the Reverse Course was the process of localization of American occupation policies.

⁷¹ Recent scholarship began highlighting more on local agency. For instance, Hans Martin Kramer, “Just Who Reversed the Course? The Red Purge in Higher Education during the Occupation of Japan,” *Social Science Japan Journal* (November 2004), 1-18. Also, Rekishigaku kenkyukai ed., *Senryo seisaku no tenkan to kowa* [*The Shift of Occupation Policy and the Peace Treaty*] (Tokyo: Aoki shoten, 1990), 4-41.

⁷² Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 225-273.

This point should be clear when we look at how initial reform-oriented policies were modified or discontinued. First, the policy of dissolving the *zaibatsu* was established in 1946, and conducted initially under the control of the Anti-Trust Division of the GHQ. It went slowly in the beginning because many of its staff came from American business circles, who disliked any state control over private companies.⁷³ Then, liberal members of the Government Section (GS) took control of the issue in early 1946, which provoked bureaucratic and jurisdictional disputes between the two divisions. GS members gradually lost control by the beginning of 1947 due to mounting criticism from both American and Japanese business circles to the effect that they were “New Dealish.” Eventually only a handful of companies were dissolved and most others were able to maintain their wartime forms, as conservative Japanese had hoped.

The U.S. policy of harsh and punitive war reparations was planned and approved in the early period of the occupation, but eventually abolished altogether.⁷⁴ To begin with, many Japanese remembered World War II as the war against the United States and thus viewed themselves as merely “victims” of the war, rather than as aggressors in Asia. This framework attenuated an angle of reparation as a central issue of Japan’s war responsibility. In fact, except for a few intellectuals like a novelist Ara Masato, who had been problematizing the war responsibility of the literati, many economists and scholars tended to discuss the reparation issue only in the framework of rehabilitation of the Japanese economy, thus viewing

⁷³ Bisson, *Nihon senryo kaiso ki [A Memoir of Occupation of Japan]*, diary entries between May and August of 1946, 86-114.

⁷⁴ Rekishigaku kenkyukai ed., *Senryo seisaku no tenkan to kowa [The Shift of Occupation Policy and the Peace Treaty]*, 8, 128.

reparation solely as a burden. Such economists' arguments seemed credible when they were used to explain the rise of the Nazis as a result of heavy reparations on Germany after World War I. A notable social scientist Ouchi Hyoe, for instance, commented on war reparations that, due to Japan's insolvency, there would be no way but to say "forgive us."⁷⁵ Because the issue appeared for many solely as an economic one, the cancellation of war reparations did not come up as a "reverse course." It went along perfectly with their wishes, particularly for conservatives and businessmen.

Similarly, the tone of labor policy changed radically from encouraging labor activism to limiting and restricting it. In addition to the domestic political shift in the United States and MacArthur's adaptation to it, conservative Japanese politicians played roles in containing the power of labor, as well. For instance, MacArthur's "directive" to Prime Minister Ashida Hitoshi in July 1948 to ban strikes among governmental workers is well-known; yet, as historian Koseki Shoichi reveals, it was actually issued in response to a request from Ashida's side to MacArthur for the purpose of "stabilizing" society.⁷⁶ Japanese conservatives' strategy to use the authority of the GHQ to maintain social stability can be seen around the issue of communist activities in Japan, too. Although the policy of releasing Japanese communists from prisons was enacted under the direction of the GHQ, such policy was literally reversed due to mounting objections from conservatives in both

⁷⁵ Roundtable, "Tandoku kowa to Nihon keizai [Separate Peace and Japanese Economy]," in *Sekai*, November 1950, 105, quoted in Oguma, *Minshu to aikoku*, 485-488.

⁷⁶ Koseki Shoichi, "Senryo seisaku no tenkan to chudo seiken [The Change of Occupation Policy and the 'Middle-of-the-Road' Administration]," in Rekishigaku kenkyukai ed., *Senryo seisaku no tenkan to kowa [The Shift of Occupation Policy and the Peace Treaty]*, 25-26.

countries. Such an attack on communists was nothing new; a quarter-century's memories of communists in Japan as illegal at best and more commonly as sorts of gangsters, fanatics, or even epidemic diseases did not suddenly disappear from the minds of many people.

As leftist agendas and labor activism were on defense, old bosses came back. The policy of purging former-regime bosses and military officials—often called the “White Purge” in contrast to the “Red Purge” years later—was executed by 1946. However, it was gradually lifted through the tireless efforts of Japanese and American conservatives in the years that followed, which bore fruit beginning in late-1948 with the release of A-class war criminal suspects, such as Kishi Nobusuke, Kodama Yoshio, and Sasagawa Ryoichi.⁷⁷ As a matter of fact, the “White Purge” was not particularly effective because many purged persons could find “pride” in being expelled. One translator recalled that, when one was purged, people considered him to have been recognized by the GHQ as a “first rank citizen of Japan.” If one was not dismissed, people whispered, “He was such small people [*sic*], so that he was not even purged.”⁷⁸ This sort of local and social recognition helped to maintain old-bosses’ prestige in their communities. It is not difficult to imagine the high respect they received when the “Reverse Course” resulted in their returning to their hometowns.

⁷⁷ Nakamura Masanori, “Senryo toha nandatta noka [What was the Occupation?]” in Rekishigaku kenkyukai ed., *Senryo seisaku no tenkan to kowa [The Shift of Occupation Policy and the Peace Treaty]*, 238.

⁷⁸ Ai Kume, “The Reminiscences of Ai Kume, Occupation of Japan, 1975,” 23, OHC, Columbia University.

The clearest example of the Reverse Course as a return to “normalcy” was the revival of conservative Japanese politicians and bureaucrats, who had believed that SCAP programs were too far on the left. As they became accustomed to the U.S. occupation, these Japanese actors learned how to behave and take advantage of factional disputes in the GHQ. Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru, for example, continuously stressed the size of the threat of communist influence in Japan. In his dozens of letters to MacArthur, he repeatedly brought up the political and economical instability of his government. Once he learned that this strategy was effective in slowing down, or even canceling, early reform policies, Yoshida and conservatives repeatedly used similar anti-communist language to achieve domestic and personal goals.⁷⁹ This was exactly what East Asia expert Owen Lattimore had predicted and worried about in late 1945, stating that the Japanese would use the threat of revolution to stampede the Americans, and that the United States, afraid of the specter of revolution, would eventually abandon radical programs.⁸⁰

Briefly examining the phenomenon of the so-called “Reverse Course,” it is difficult to believe that it was solely directed from Washington as part of Cold War strategy. At its core, the phenomenon was more local, personal, and fragmented, although such messy minor factors were often hidden under the mantle of a heroic, clear, and seemingly coherent narrative of American Cold War strategy. In fact, it was the Japanese newspaper *Yomiuri Shinbun* that gave the name of “*Gyaku kosu*

⁷⁹Bisson, *Nihon senryo kaiso ki [A Memoir of Occupation of Japan]*, June 9, 1946, 94-95; Dower, *Empire and Aftermath*, 295; and Yoshida Shigeru, *Kaiso junen [Recollections of Ten Years]* (Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1957) . Also, see Seabald’s memoir, *Nihon senryo gaiko no kaiso [Memoir of Japanese Occupation Diplomacy]*, 82.

⁸⁰ Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan*, 36.

[reverse course]” to various shifts in U.S. occupation policies and activities, and published a series of articles “*Toto taru gyaku kosu* [Rushing Reverse Course]” in 1951, combining fragmented stories as if they had a single root. This view permeated Japan, and indeed extended beyond its borders. Several countries in East Asia and the Pacific, such as Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines, were similarly alarmed by the shift in U.S. occupation policy. Needless to say, this emerging trend disturbed tens of thousands in China.

Memories of War and Chinese Reactions to the Perceived “Reverse Course”

“It is an iron fact that the American imperialists are helping Japan. It is a 100-percent fact that we do not need even to discuss. The fact of America’s restoring of Japan creates a grave threat for China. All Chinese must raise an objection to it. It is very strange that the government remains hostile to such patriotic movements.” So said one speaker in one of many anti-American forums in Shanghai in the spring of 1948.⁸¹ Whatever the real factors were, the shift in U.S. occupation policy for Japan was readily felt across the sea in the years between 1946 and 1948, and sparked popular outcries, which were widely known as “*fan Meifu Ri* [Opposing the U.S. support of Japan].” As in Japan, many Chinese viewed the “Reverse Course” as a deliberate reversal in America’s Asian strategy that indicates a coherent intention to rehabilitate the Japanese economy, revive conservative elements, and use Japan as a fortress to invade China. In Shanghai where the movements first became popular,

⁸¹ “Shanghaishi jinchaju zhengzhichu guanyu Shanghai gongyun xueyun qingkuan huibian ziliao [Shanghai Police Department Political Section’s Collection of Documents Regarding the Situation of Shanghai Labor and Student Movements] (Hereafter “Shanghai gongyun xueyun qingkuan”),” Q131-6-530, the Shanghai Municipal Archives, Shanghai, PRC (hereafter SMA).

for instance, approximately 15,000 college and high-school students joined a demonstration on May 4, 1948, against American policy in Japan (Picture 3). Such demonstrations evoked sympathies nationwide, in Beiping (Beijing), Tianjin, Kunming, Guangzhou, Xiamen, and Changchun, bringing various existing anti-government and anti-American movements together under the banner of *fan MeifuRi*, which generated a base for long-lasting anti-American sentiments.⁸²

Because of the extremely fast and vigorous development of these movements, many contemporaries, particularly Nationalist members and sympathizers, as well as American observers, believed that communist propaganda and manipulation created them. After observing the spread of student movements nationwide, for instance, Chiang Kai-shek [Jiang Jieshi] angrily wrote in his diary that communist-supported “professional students” had instigated other students. Based on this viewpoint, police departments in cities were ordered to investigate and make lists of such “professional students” stirring the movements.⁸³ The American ambassador to China, J. Leighton Stuart agreed to the Generalissimo, attributing the students’ and intellectuals’ opposition to the U.S. government to communists’ “engineering and manipulation.” Likewise, the Consul General in Shanghai, John Cabot, stated that students who took an anti-American stance were deceived by “sinister propaganda.”⁸⁴

⁸² Hong Zhang, *America Perceived: The Making of Chinese Images of the United States, 1945-1953* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 2002), 125-27.

⁸³ Chiang Kai-shek, May 28, 1946, Chiang Kai-shek Diaries (hereafter CKSD), Box 46, Hoover Institution Archives (hereafter HIA), Stanford University, Stanford, CA. Beipin shi jingcha ju guanyu... cha xuesheng wei fanfuRi qunzhong youxing...deng xunling [Beijing Police Department regarding directives on...examining students attending mass demonstrations],” 13, J183-2-29849, Beijing Municipal Archives, Beijing, PRC (hereafter BMA).

⁸⁴ Hong Zhang, *America Perceived*, 127-28.

However, the development of *fan Meifu* and anti-American sentiments during this period were not simply products of communist orders, even though it is true that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) took full advantage of the situation and greatly benefited from the political climate the movement fostered.⁸⁵ First and foremost, objections to U.S. occupation policy for Japan actually began in Nationalist-Party (GMD)-leaning newspapers and non-partisan newspapers in Shanghai in the summer of 1946. One major newspaper that touted non-partisanship, *Da Gong Bao*, asserted that, despite a radical transformation since the end of the war, the system of Japanese militarism and its economic infrastructure still firmly existed.⁸⁶ An editorial in July 1946 argued:

Japan made a mistake. Yet, it has not collapsed and does not have [an internal] war, and the country has now devoted itself to the task of reconstruction. This race still has power. Deep down, the Japanese do not respect China, as was made clear by some arrogant words of repatriated soldiers when they left China—"We will come back in twenty years." Under the moderate U.S. occupation policy, the old forces of Japan wore the mantle of democracy, and, surely, some part of the militarists and *zaibatsu* were cleaned up. Nevertheless, the democratic forces in Japan are still weak, and all of the reforms remain incomplete under the influence of the emperor and senior statesmen [...]. Although we do not need to retaliate against Japan, the questions of how to eradicate Japanese militarism, and how to guide Japan to follow the road of democracy should be the most important tasks for postwar Chinese diplomacy.⁸⁷

Da Gong Bao's attitude was shared by another popular independent newspaper in Shanghai, *Fei Bao*: "MacArthur is too generous. The Japanese are maneuvering him deviously and trying to restore themselves," adding that the emperor should bear

⁸⁵ For the overview of student movements, see, for instance, Jeffrey Wasserstrom, *Student Protests in Twentieth-Century China: The View from Shanghai* (Stanford, 1991). Besides pro-government and anti-government factions within student movements, Wasserstrom argues that the vast majority of students circa 1947 claimed that they were not supporters of either side but neutral critics of both the parties. Wasserstrom, *Student Protests in Twentieth-Century China*, 241.

⁸⁶ *Da Gong Bao* (Shanghai), July 5, 1946, Northeastern Normal University Library (hereafter NNUL), Changchun, PRC.

⁸⁷ *Da Gong Bao* (Tianjin), July 25, 1946, NNUL, Changchun, PRC.

the responsibility for the war, and that Japan should pay reparations to China.⁸⁸ In the midst of the *fan MeifuRi* movements in May 1948, *Da Gong Bao* similarly raised its voice, saying, “The threat is extremely grave for China. If Japan would re-arm, then naturally China would be the target of an attack. We need to firmly oppose [America’s restoring of Japan].”⁸⁹ It was no wonder that the paper vehemently opposed Leighton Stuart’s statement attributing the cause of the movements to a communist plot.⁹⁰

Not only communist sympathizers but also Nationalist sympathizers disagreed with Stuart’s view. Although Chiang Kai-shek’s tolerant and moderate policy toward Japan—the “return good for evil” policy—had been praised since the surrender of Japan, disagreements from within came to the surface as the news of “America’s policy of rebuilding Japan” continued to spread. Even the Nationalist Party’s official organ, *Zhongyang Ribao*, expressed dissatisfaction in April of 1948.⁹¹ Chiang Kai-shek, nevertheless, publicly reconfirmed his support for American policy in the following month, further exacerbating dissatisfaction among party members and their sympathizers, such as intellectuals and businessmen.

Such discord within the party could be seen in one of the protest forums in Shanghai. A student asked: “Why does today’s government agree to the American policy of building Japan?” One panelist, a specialist of international relations and a GMD member for twenty years, replied: “In fact, governmental officials are not

⁸⁸ *Fei Bao* (Shanghai), March 19, 1947, NNUL, Changchun, PRC; *Fei Bao*, September 15, 1947, NNUL, Changchun, PRC.

⁸⁹ *Da Gong Bao* (Shanghai), May 11, 1948, NNUL, Changchun, PRC.

⁹⁰ *Da Gong Bao* (Shanghai), June 5, 1948; *Da Gong Bao* (Tianjin), June 19, 1948, NNUL, Changchun, PRC.

⁹¹ *Zhongyang Ribao* (Nanjing), April 11, 1948, NNUL, Changchun, PRC.

necessarily all agreeing to that policy. I have many friends in political and military circles who are deeply concerned about this issue. They have lots of thinking in their hearts, while not speaking out publicly.”⁹² One who spoke out at that time was the Vice President of the Republic of China, Li Songren, who was known for his critical attitudes toward American policy. Also, many businessmen, who were not typically communist sympathizers, lined up to take part in the *fan MeifuRi* movements. One businessman stated in another forum, “We need to oppose the U.S. policy of helping Japan because the policy is wrong and because it would pose a threat to the lives of the Chinese people.” He asserted, “Opposing the [American policy of] restoring Japan is patriotic; not opposing it is a betrayal of our country!”⁹³

To be sure, the Communist Party had been encouraging anti-government and anti-American demonstrations, actively intervening and promoting student movements. The CCP, in fact, had decided to take an anti-American stance by July 1946, and pronounced its opposition to the American policy of rebuilding Japan in July 1947, according to the Shanghai Police Department’s confidential investigation.⁹⁴ However, this kind of opposition was not particularly unique to the Communist Party. A number of independent newspapers, like *Da Gong Bao* and *Fei Bao*, had expressed a similar view, and it was quite well-received by that time. In addition, dissenting opinions concerning the shift in U.S. policy were observed not

⁹² Meng Xianzhang, June 3, 1948, in “Jiaoda tongxun [Shanghai Jiaotong University Report],” D2-0-898, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.

⁹³ Chen Shutong, May 26, 1948, in “Shanghai gongyun xueyun qingkuan [The Situation of Shanghai Labor and Student Movements],” Q131-6-530, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.

⁹⁴ “1947 niandu Shanghai xueyun ciliao [Materials on Shanghai Student Movements in 1947],” Q131-6-464, SMA; Zuo Shuangwen and Chen Wei, 1948 nian “fan MeifuRi” yundong ji qi yu guoming zhengfu de hudong [“The Movements of Opposing the U.S. Support of Japan in 1948 and Its Interactions with the Nationalist Government”], *Guangdong shehui kexue* 6 (2006), 101-106.

only in China but also in countries far beyond the influence of the CCP, including the Philippines, Australia, and New Zealand.⁹⁵ Given the growing opposition among GMD members and sympathizers, as well as those in other countries, it is difficult to attribute the development of the *fan MeifuRi* movements solely to the CCP's propaganda and mobilization. Rather, it is more reasonable to say that the Communist Party quickly and aptly adapted itself to popular mentalities of that period.

If Communist Party control did not explain the scale of the *fan MeifuRi* movements and anti-American sentiments in this period, what factors could help render an account? The key was anti-colonial sentiments on the part of millions of Chinese people—more specifically, again, their experiences and memories of World War II. This explains why similar sentiments were observed in several countries in the Asia-Pacific region, and why such feelings were strongest in China. For many Chinese, World War II meant the War Against Japan—the war in which millions of Chinese perished, evoking countless images of brutal Japanese imperialism and of its slaughter of the Chinese people. In a sense, the *fan MeifuRi* movements developed so quickly and widely because the change in U.S. occupation policy for Japan was observed through memories of Japanese imperialism. To spread such sentiments nationwide, the CCP should not have needed any propaganda or manipulation; after all, it was the Japanese military that invaded the country, including thousands of small towns and villages, conducting the operations the Chinese called “kill all, plunder all, and burn all,” in front of the Chinese people.

⁹⁵ Hong Zhang, *America Perceived*, 140.

Memories of the war were everywhere (Picture 4). Writers and journalists in newspapers and magazines, as well as panelists, moderators, and students in many forums and demonstrations, almost all referred to their experiences and memories of war when they expressed harsh critiques of American policy in Japan. One *fan MeifuRi* forum, held on June 3, 1948, actually began with a one-minute silence for the war dead. Then, a moderator addressed to the audience of 3,500, including prominent guests, such as the mayor of Shanghai, Wu Guozhen, as well as scholars, businessmen, and other Nationalist Party members:

During the eight years of the War Against Japan, we, each of us, deeply experienced the cruelty of Japanese fascism. Through our own eyes, we saw our fathers and brothers die beneath the sword of Japanese fascism, and saw our sisters violated by Japanese fascism, and our houses were demolished. But in the end we won a victory. This victory was won at the cost of thousands and millions of Chinese people's lives. Today, even before the bloodstain gets dry, Japanese fascism has been reviving with the help of American imperialism.⁹⁶

In this forum, eight speakers, including this moderator, gave speeches; not one failed to refer to experiences and memories of the previous war. In another forum, on May 26, 1948, seventeen panelists—including the widow of renowned novelist Lu Xun, as well as an economist, chemist, historian, businessman, journalist, and various lawyers, editors, professors, and others—spoke, and again everyone alluded to their war experiences as grounds for opposition to American policy in Japan.⁹⁷

Throughout this period, such “anti-American” calls were usually anti-American “policy” and anti-American “government” supporting Japan, but not yet really “anti-America” or “anti-Americans.” What these appeals commonly shared

⁹⁶ Wu Zhendong, June 3, 1948, in “Shanghai gongyun xueyun qingkuan [The Situation of Shanghai Labor and Student Movements],” Q131-6-530, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.. The full-text of the forum, including questions and answers between students and guests, was recorded by three stenographers.

⁹⁷ The detail of the forum on May 26, 1948 can be seen in “Shanghai gongyun xueyun qingkuan [The Situation of Shanghai Labor and Student Movements],” Q131-6-530, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.

was, rather, skepticism and distrust toward Japan due to bitter memories of the war. Some speakers in these forums even spared time to state that their “anti-American” views represented opposition to the U.S. government, particularly concerning its policy in Japan, but not toward the “American people” in general.⁹⁸ By the same token, although independent newspapers and GMD-leaning local papers continued to criticize the Nationalist government’s weak diplomacy and the American policy of restoring Japan, at the core of these critiques lay deep skepticism toward Japan, rather than toward the United States. In other words, the United States was criticized because it appeared to be “supporting Japanese imperialism and conservative elements,” and the GMD was condemned for following the American policy without expressing any sign of independent opinions.⁹⁹

It is not difficult to discern the specter of Japanese imperialism still lingering beneath the development of the *fan MeifuRi* movements. As in many other countries in the postwar period, experiences and memories of World War II set overall contexts in China, through which every contemporary foreign and domestic affair was observed. This effect was particularly strong in political and social arenas, and this point provides a key to understanding the spread of anti-government and anti-American sentiments during the Chinese Civil War.

Anti-Government and Anti-American Sentiments

⁹⁸ Such remarks can be seen in both of forums on May 26 and June 3, 1948. “Shanghai gongyun xueyun qingkuan [The Situation of Shanghai Labor and Student Movements],” Q131-6-530, SMA, Shanghai, PRC..

⁹⁹ *Da Gong Bao*, (Shanghai), June 11, 1947, NNUL, Changchun, PRC. See also Tillman Durdin’s article, “U.S. Help to Japan Is Alarming China,” *New York Times*, November 2, 1946.

The Chinese Civil War between the Nationalist Party and Chinese Communist Party, which resumed in the summer of 1946, was, of course, fought on battlefields. Seen purely in terms of military capability, the Nationalist Party forces surpassed those of the Communist Party roughly four to one.¹⁰⁰ Not surprisingly, the war, in the beginning, evolved in a way advantageous to Nationalist forces; they, in fact, captured the CCP's base camp, Yanan, in 1947, and, by the beginning of 1948, Chiang Kai-shek could say bombastically that they would be able to sweep out all communists within a year. Nonetheless, GMD forces suffered decisive defeats later in that year, eventually causing them to retreat to Taiwan in 1949. How did this happen? Why did the tide of war turn to become advantageous to the Communist forces in the end?¹⁰¹ The key to these questions involves the particular nature of this

¹⁰⁰ Amako Satoshi, *Chuka jinmin kyowa koku shi* [A History of the People's Republic of China] (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2005 [1997]); For the best overview of the Chinese Civil War, see, for instance, Odd Arne Westad, *Decisive Encounters: The Chinese Civil War, 1946-1950* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003).

¹⁰¹ Scholars have presented diverse perspectives to explain the communist victory in China. In particular, the roles of the Chinese Communist Party and its relationship with the people have been among the most controversial topics. Some scholars have stressed grassroots agency, focusing on either peasants' nationalism, their acceptance of CCP programs, or their defense of their own local economies. See, for instance, respectively, Chalmers Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power: The Emergence of Revolutionary China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962), and Mark Selden, *The Yanan Way in Revolutionary China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), and Ralph Thaxton, *Salt of the Earth: The Political Origins of Peasant Protest and Communist Revolution in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997). Maurice Meisner, among them, provides perhaps the most populist approach, highlighting popular support and participation in revolutionary struggles. Meisner, *Mao's China and After: A History of the People's Republic* (New York: Free Press, 1999 [1977]).

On the other hand, other scholars have underscored the crucial roles of the CCP in the creation, organization, and maintenance of the Chinese Revolution. See, for example, Frederick C Teiwes, *Politics & purges in China: Rectification and the Decline of Party Norms, 1950-1965* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1979), Steven Levine, *Anvil of Victory: The Communist Revolution in Manchuria, 1945-1948* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987); Odoric Wou, *Mobilizing the Masses: Building Revolution in Henan* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994); Joseph K.S. Yick, *Making urban revolution in China: the CCP-GMD struggle for Beiping-Tianjin, 1945-1949* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1995); and James Gao, *The Communist Takeover of Hangzhou: The Transformation of City and Cadre, 1949-1954* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004). Among them, Steven Levine, for example, criticizes the term "peasant revolution" as misleading, and highlights Communist Party's

war. It was fought not only on battlefields but also within society over a sense of legitimacy and authority, and such “battles” were no less important than real combat in the Civil War. After all, many cities surrendered to the People’s Liberation Army without fierce battles. What mattered in the war was the politics of trust among a large portion of the population. In such battle, “*minxin*”—literally, the heart of the people—was crucial.

It is important to note that neither anti-GMD-government nor anti-American sentiments began in ideological confrontation. Many people’s problems with the Nationalist government were more local and specific. Take Shanghai as an example. A minor problem might have been only about a local public policy, as one “reactionary” wall-scribbling read: “Government officials, you don’t need to ride trains and go to dance halls; please come to the streets, and look at the piles of trash.”¹⁰² Yet even such complaints were rather severely cracked down upon. Two high-school students in Shanghai, for instance, were given a two-year jail sentence with a three-year suspension for putting seven “reactionary” posters on the wall.¹⁰³ A playwright was put under police surveillance because his scenarios stressed the

organizational and military capabilities as the primary factor for their victory. Levine, *Anvil of Victory*, 243-48.

Furthermore, Odd Arne Westad carefully traces military history of the Chinese Civil War, arguing that the communist victory was not a predetermined conclusion, at least, until the PLA gained decisive victories on battlefields in 1948. Odd Arne Westad, *Decisive Encounters: The Chinese Civil War, 1946-1950* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003). For more detailed discussion on existing literature, see, for instance, Westad, *Decisive Encounters*, 383-401.

¹⁰² “Shanghaishi jinchaju guanyu shichaju ling ge fenju chudong zhuyi Zhonggong dixia dang zai gongren xuesheng deng huodong xunling [Shanghai Police Department’s Instruction to Branch Offices to Pay Attention to the Underground Chinese Communist Party in Labor and Student Activities] (Hereafter “Zhonggong dixia dang zai gongren xuesheng deng huodong”),” Q144-4-1, SMA, Shanghai, PRC..

¹⁰³ “Shanghai gaodeng teshu xingshi fating panjue [A Judgment at the Shanghai High Special Criminal Court],” May 29, 1948, Q189-1-60, SMA, Shanghai, PRC..

violence of American soldiers stationed in China and depicted scenes of the Nationalist Party government fawning on Americans.¹⁰⁴

In an effort to keep order, the Shanghai city government banned hundreds of newspapers, magazines, maps, and books, with titles such as *Ideal Marriage*, *American Public Opinions*, and *Several Problems in the History of Chinese Society*.¹⁰⁵ Likewise, one school administrator ordered tighter controls concerning popular songs on campus that would “instigate disorder, and intend to destroy society and state.”¹⁰⁶ None of these controls, however, seemed effective; in many cases, they simply backfired. After all, it is impossible to crack down on popular sentiments. Posters expressing complaints and discontent toward the government were rampant.¹⁰⁷ Arrests of “reactionary” college and high school students only aroused much larger protest movements on the side of students, while causing morality and justice on the part of the local offices to deteriorate.¹⁰⁸ The surveillance of the aforementioned dramatist only found that he frequently had parties at night, and that, actually, many of his guests were GMD naval officers.¹⁰⁹ And, the banning of books provoked slogans like “We Have Freedom to Read!”¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴ “Qudi fanMei xiju gequ xunling [An Instruction to Crack Down anti-America Dramas and Songs],” February-April, 1947, Q131-4-187, SMA, Shanghai, PRC..

¹⁰⁵ “Shanghaishi shehuiju guanyu chajin jinbu shukan 2 [Shanghai Social Department; Cracking down Progressive Books and Journals],” 14-31, Q6-12-167, SMA, Shanghai, PRC..

¹⁰⁶ “Jiang wei jingbei silingbu daibu Shanghai gaoxueyuan xuesheng youguan cailiao [The Materials Related with Jiang Jieshi’s False Security Police Headquarter Arresting Shanghai College Students], 1947-1949,” Q246-1-240, SMA, Shanghai, PRC..

¹⁰⁷ “Zhonggong dixia dang zai gongren xuesheng deng huodong [The Underground Chinese Communist Party in Labor and Student Activities],” Q144-4-1. 3. SMA, Shanghai, PRC..

¹⁰⁸ “‘Huai zhengfu’ bixu gaizu [‘Broken Government’ Needs to Reorganize],” in *Wencui*, Vol. 40, July 23, 1946, D2-0-798, SMA; “Lun MeidifuRi de yinmou [Discussing the Plot of American Imperialist Helping of Japan] ” D2-0-753, SMA, Shanghai, PRC..

¹⁰⁹ “Qudi fanMei xiju gequ xunling [An Instruction to Crack Down anti-America Dramas and Songs],” February-April, 1947, Q131-4-187, SMA, Shanghai, PRC..

¹¹⁰ “1947 niandu Shanghai xueyun ziliao [Materials on Shanghai Student Movements in 1947],”

The GMD's crackdown was particularly shocking because it occurred during one of the most liberal-democratic moments in modern China history. In Shanghai alone, the period following the defeat of Japan observed the blooming of hundreds of new magazines and newspapers, which provided forums for free and open exchanges of views. These new voices boldly expressed their hopes for democracy, freedom, and equality, thus often openly taking confrontational positions against the GMD government.¹¹¹ Among these, one of the most active and prominent media at that time was a weekly magazine, *Guancha* [Observation], which was established by a journalist, Chu Anpin, in September 1946. From the time of its establishment, the magazine demanded the realization of a liberal and democratic government, and continued to express its support for the *fan MeifuRi* student movements, opposing to the GMD government's oppressive policy.¹¹² It is important to note that, even during the GMD's suppression, quite a few Nationalist Party members also shared and valued an atmosphere of free and open debates. A Shanghai mayor, Wu Guozhen, who later became a governor of Taiwan after the GMD's evacuation, participated in some of student forums in June 1948, where both Nationalist and Communist party members were present. In one of them, it was actually students who got excited and beaten the mayor, who actually ordered soldiers around him not to open fire on

Q131-6-464, SMA, Shanghai, PRC..

¹¹¹ *Wencui*, Vol. 40, July 23, 1946, D2-0-798-2, SMA, Shanghai, PRC; Kubo Toru, *Chugoku kin gendai shi Vol. 4: Shakai shugi heno chosen* [Modern Chinese History Vol. 4: A Challenge for Socialism] (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2011), 9.

¹¹² "Beiping xuesheng beibu beishi ji [Report on Beijing students who were arrested and released]," *Guancha*, Vol. 3, Issue 7, October 3, 1947, D2-0-2182-19, SMA; "Ji Beiping xuesheng fanfuRi tuji da youxing [Report on Beijing's mass demonstrations of opposing supporting Japan]," Vol. 4, Issue 17, April 11, 1948, D2-0-2193-13, SMA, Shanghai, PRC..

students.¹¹³ This episode suggests that, however repressive GMD's rule, there was a room for discussion which was still possible at that time.

As such, even GMD-leaning newspapers began critiquing the Nationalist Party's rule. A small local newspaper in the city of Jilin in the northeast, *Lao Baixing Ribao*, for instance, continued to demand democratic reforms of the government, while maintaining an anti-communist stance, often appealing to communist soldiers not to waste life. Yet, the paper published articles sympathetic to student movements, praising them as "patriotic movements," thus taking a critical stance toward both parties.¹¹⁴ Likewise, *Fei Bao* in Shanghai, while maintaining a pro-Nationalist tone in this period, often made fun of the slow pace of governmental reforms, as in one political cartoon showing the many privileges and exceptions that governmental "reform" could not regulate (Picture 5).¹¹⁵ It argued that people were losing their trust in the GMD government due to the continuation of the Civil War, the collapse of the economy, and the prevalence of many forms of corruption, concluding that the prestige of the Nationalist Party had been declining.¹¹⁶ While *Fei Bao's* pro-Nationalist tone did not change, its editorial claimed, "Those who win the hearts of the people gain ascendancy, while those who lose them die out!"¹¹⁷ The

¹¹³ "Shanghai shi jingcha ju zhenya 1948 nian nei xuesheng yungdong qingkuang huibian [Shanghai Police Department's collection regarding the situations of suppressing student movements in 1948]" Q131-6-466, SMA, Shanghai, PRC..

¹¹⁴ *Laobaixing Ribao* (Jilin), January 18, 1947, February 7, 1947, and March 19 and 23, 1947, NNUL, Changchun, PRC.

¹¹⁵ *Fei Bao* (Shanghai), October 24, 1947, NNUL, Changchun, PRC.

¹¹⁶ *Fei Bao* (Shanghai), October 25, 1947, NNUL, Changchun, PRC.

¹¹⁷ *Fei Bao* (Shanghai), October 2, 1947, NNUL, Changchun, PRC.

paper added: “The hearts of the people are most difficult to control and to force. Earlier to win them, the more advantageous the position will be.”¹¹⁸

The GMD leadership almost ignored such voices, while the CCP leadership might have been more sensitive to them. When Zhou Enlai repeatedly wrote memorandums on how to win people’s hearts, Chiang Kai-shek, in fact, simply lamented in his diary about the “stupidity and ignorance of his 400 million population.”¹¹⁹ For Nationalist Party leaders, popular sentiments could not be seen anything but reflections of communist propaganda and manipulation, although frustrations and complaints about the government were, in fact, more fragmented and local, rather than ideological. As the GMD leadership continued to treat popular attitudes accordingly, and continued to crack down on any dissenters as such, it was no wonder that the government quickly lost popular support. Much worse for the GMD government, their oppressive policy reminded many of similar conduct by the Japanese police and military during World War II. The more the GMD resembled Japanese militarists, the more quickly the authority of the Nationalist Party decayed.

Anti-American sentiments developed in this period in a similar manner. Previously favorable images of the United States began to deteriorate in the postwar period for various reasons. One was, as we have seen, that the U.S. government was seen to be supporting and re-arming Japan. The other was Washington’s continuous support for the increasingly unpopular and suppressive GMD government, which culminated with the China Aid Act authorized by U.S. Congress in April 1948.

¹¹⁸ *Fei Bao* (Shanghai), November 10, 1948, NNUL, Changchun, PRC.

¹¹⁹ Kubo, *Shakai shugi heno chosen* [A Challenge for Socialism], 3-4; Chiang Kai-shek, June 27, 1948, CKSD, Box 46, HIA, Stanford, CA.

Another might have been the influx of American import goods into Chinese cities, which were increasingly seen as dominating the market and marginalizing domestic merchandise.

Another arguably most important factor was thousands of local conflicts arising between local Chinese residents and American soldiers stationed in China in the post-WWII period. One of these, the Shen Chong incident, for instance, involved the alleged rape of a Chinese college student by an American marine in December 1946, which triggered widespread protest movements in urban areas all over China.¹²⁰ As historian Hong Zhang makes clear, however, while anti-American protest rallies nationwide were surely built on the alleged rape of a Chinese female, actually, they were not really about that particular incident. In fact, slogans at these rallies read: “China is not a colony; why does America stay in China?” and “Defend China’s Independence and Freedom.”¹²¹ What many people expressed in protest rallies was not simply about a particular incident, but what it symbolized.

Each incident was problematized not because it was particularly important, but because it was considered symbolic of a larger pattern—namely, colonialism. In this process, experiences and memories of the War Against Japan played key roles. After all, conflicts between American soldiers and the Chinese residents evoked many people’s sympathies because they were reminded of similar and ubiquitous conflicts between Japanese soldiers and the Chinese. The Shen Chong incident, for example, reminded many of the Japanese atrocities against females during the

¹²⁰ Hong Zhang, *America Perceived*, 77-111; Ronald Spector, *In the Ruins of Empire: The Japanese Surrender and the Battle for Postwar Asia* (New York: Random House, 2007), 264-68.

¹²¹ “1947 niandu Shanghai xueyun ziliao [Materials on Shanghai Student Movements in 1947],” 128, Q131-6-464, SMA.

war.¹²² Furthermore, the fact of American occupation of Japan and the southern part of Korea, combined with allegations concerning U.S. policies for restoring and re-arming Japan, caused many people to fear a repeat of the foreign invasion.

In a sense, anti-American sentiments in China developed as American actions were gradually seen as overlapping with images of Japanese imperialism in the wartime.¹²³ Anti-American feelings were quickly and widely “understood” and accepted by thousands of Chinese because of anti-colonial sentiments—more specifically, because of experiences and memories of the War Against Japan that were so intense and cruel. In short, the development of anti-government and anti-American sentiments in postwar China had more to do with local wariness and historical context based on experiences and memories of World War II than with the Communist Party’s propaganda or Moscow’s international plots. A parallel can be seen in the spread of anti-Soviet sentiments among the Chinese in a similar period, which culminated in large demonstrations of, reportedly, 4,000 to 10,000 students day after day, in Shanghai and other cities in February of 1946, demanding the withdrawal of Soviet forces from the northeastern region.¹²⁴

Such anti-colonial feelings among the Chinese people also explain why the Reverse Course in Japan aroused such extreme reactions in China. The Japan issue

¹²² “Lun ‘fanMei’ yu ‘Zhong-Mei chuantong youyi’ [Discuss ‘anti-America’ and ‘Sino-America traditional friendship’],” *Xin Wenhua*, Vol. 3, Issue 6, February 5, 1947, D2-0-427-1, SMA.

¹²³ Such associations can be seen various “reactionary” scribblings and rumors. “Zhonggong dixia dang zai gongren xuesheng deng huodong xunling [The Underground Chinese Communist Party in Labor and Student Activities],” May 26, 1947, Q144-4-1, SMA; “1947 niandu Shanghai xueyun ziliao [Materials on Shanghai Student Movements in 1947],” Q131-6-464, SMA, Changchun, PRC.

¹²⁴ “Shanghai shi jinchaju Hongkou fengju zhengzhi zu guanyu diaocha zhong xiao xuesheng zai Sulian lingshi guan menwai youxing shiwei [Shanghai Police Department Hongkou branch office political group’s document regarding investigation on junior- and high-school students’ demonstrations outside of a gate of the Soviet Consulate],” February 23- February 26, 1946, Q146-2-73, SMA, Changchun, PRC; See, also, Wasserstrom, *Student Protests in Twentieth-Century China*, 247-250.

served as a catalyst, evoking bitter war memories and anti-imperial feelings, while sharpening daily frustration toward the local government and generating the basis for long-lasting anti-government and anti-American feelings. In the midst of the Civil War, how to respond to the shift in U.S. occupation policy in Japan became a litmus test between the two opposing parties over their legitimacy and authority. Because of deep memories of the war, the Japan issue caused cracks to appear in the Nationalist Party, undermining trust in the GMD government from within, while the Communist Party greatly benefited from the political emotions that evolved during the *fan MeifuRi* movements.

It is ironic that a growing number of people, particularly intellectuals, businessmen, students, and other urbanites, who sought more democracy, freedom, and equality, stood against the Nationalist Party and the United States, while keeping in step with a Communist Party that was, in the end, more brutal and oppressive. Nonetheless, appealing for democracy and freedom in anti-Nationalist and anti-American rallies was no contradiction in the postwar years, particularly in view of the ruthless GMD's rules, U.S. support for the Nationalist Party, and memories of Japanese imperialism during World War II.

American Reactions to the Chinese Civil War and Its Aftermath

On the other side of the earth, in the United States, however, these complicated aspects of the *fan MeifuRi* movements and the Chinese Civil War—domestic politics, social contexts, and memories of the War Against Japan—were largely omitted, and usually only a simplified version was reported: the expansion of

communist influence in East Asia. To be sure, there were quite a few reports that attempted to call attention to social and historical backgrounds of the Chinese Revolution and its aftermath.¹²⁵ Yet, the large majority of magazines and newspapers ascribed the decay of the Nationalist Party regime simply to propaganda and manipulations of the Chinese Communist Party, or even the Kremlin, similar to the way in which they attributed the popularity of leftist thought in Japan solely to communist expansion and “socialistic” SCAP occupation policies.¹²⁶

In the period between late-1947 and mid-1948, the China issue evolved into a non-partisan topic, as members of both parties and their sympathizers used quite similar language. Henry Luce’s pro-Republican *Life* and *Time* magazines, for example, maintained some of the most hawkish attitudes among major media.¹²⁷ Born in Shandong, China, in a Presbyterian missionary family, Luce maintained a strong desire to “save” China, remained an ardent anti-communist throughout his life, and believed in the role of American foreign policy, a theme he delineated in his famous article in 1941, “The American Century.”¹²⁸ Luce’s influential magazines continuously criticized the Truman administration for being too slow and too willing to compromise, asserting, “While the U.S. talks about reform, the communists

¹²⁵ Tillman Durdin of the *New York Times* warned in late 1946 about the significance of the Japan issue as becoming an ingredient in the development of anti-American sentiments in China. Similarly, American Consul General in Tianjin, Robert Smyth, described the escalation of anti-American feelings as general feelings rather than resulting from communist manipulations. Hong Zhang, *America Perceived*, 99, 107, and 124.

¹²⁶ “The Red Shadow Lengthens over China,” *Life*, 29 November 1948, 31.

¹²⁷ For the detail of the life of Henry Luce, see Robert E. Herzstein, *Henry R. Luce, Time, and the American Crusade in Asia* (New York, 2005).

¹²⁸ Henry R. Luce, “The American Century,” *Life*, February 17, 1941, 61-65.

are winning the war.”¹²⁹ Of course, this did not mean that Democrats and their sympathizers supported the government’s China policy; pro-Democratic *Newsweek*, for instance, maintained that the United States would not permit all of China to go Communist. A Catholic and far more nationalistic magazine, *America*, often used frank but stereotypical words, as it urged support for the GMD government to “save” China from becoming a “Far Eastern puppet of the Kremlin.”¹³⁰

Decisive communist victories in China in the fall of 1948 incited many writers to amplify the tone of their critiques on the China issue. Irritated by the progress of the war, *America* magazine ardently asserted, “There is only one policy for America to adopt toward China: immediate and effective aid, whatever it costs to halt Communism.”¹³¹ By this time, quite a few local politicians in many states, particularly members of the House of Representatives, began connecting their domestic anti-communist appeals with the China issue, urging the federal government to “save” China. By early 1949, fifty-one congressmen formed a supra-partisan group, arguing that a communist victory would pose a “grave threat” to U.S. national security.¹³² One of them, John McCormack, the Democratic Representative from Massachusetts, took a firm stand in the House: “We cannot let China become subject to Communist government.”¹³³ Likewise, Minnesota Republican Walter Judd urged in the House prevention of China “falling” into the hands of communists,

¹²⁹ “China,” *Life*, 15 March 1948, 36.

¹³⁰ “DSOD,” August 7, 1947, Box 3, OPOS, RG59, NA.

¹³¹ “DSOD,” December 30, 1948, Box 3, OPOS, RG59, NA.

¹³² “DSOD,” February 16, 1946, Box 3, OPOS, RG59, NA. For more detailed accounts on American reactions to the Chinese Revolution, see, for example, Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *Patterns In the Dust: Chinese-American Relations and the Recognition Controversy, 1949-1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).

¹³³ “DSOD,” February 15, 1949, Box 3, OPOS, RG59, NA.

saying, “No matter how costly it is and dangerous to carry out this policy, if China goes down, the program will cost us in the tens of billions of dollars”¹³⁴ Such a rigid claim grew even firmer after the total defeat of GMD forces. With mounting critical remarks such as “Who Lost China?” and “Soft on Communism,” the “loss” of China was traumatic for a large number of Democrats for decades to come, although the basic formula—active America and passive China—has not been questioned until recently.¹³⁵

During this period, journalistic and sensational accounts from China were abundant.¹³⁶ Nonetheless, they were delivered and understood through local worldviews based on domestic memories and experiences in the United States. Here appears, again, the legacy of World War II for Americans. To be sure, there was no “postwar American” mentality, which can be illustrated in a monolithic way, because people’s experiences and memories differed so widely depending on age, gender, race, and where and how they experienced the war. That said, however, examining widespread views regarding China, it is not difficult to notice several dominant attitudes considered “common” at that time. First, a peculiar sense of omnipotence could not be concealed. While the “loss” of China was frequently discussed, the question itself was delusive and even arrogant; how could Americans “lose” a country they had never governed or possessed?¹³⁷ While many magazines

¹³⁴ “DSOD,” November 17, 1948, Box 3, OPOS, RG59, NA.

¹³⁵ Craig and Logevall, *America’s New Cold War*, 102-105, 135.

¹³⁶ Such catchy titles include: “Red Shadow Lengthens over China,” “Dunkirk in the Pacific,” “The Fall of Mukden,” “Last Look at Peipin [Beijing],” and “Red Advance Brings Shanghai Panic.” All from the *Life* magazine in between 1948 and 1949.

¹³⁷ For more detailed discussion on the so-called “loss” of China, see a series of articles in *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (Winter 1997), 71-115, written by Warren I. Cohen, Chen Jian, John W. Garver, Michael Sheng, and Odd Arne Westad. Also, see Thomas J. Christensen, “A ‘Lost Chance’ for What?”

insisted firmly that Americans could not “permit all of China to go Communist,” from the beginning, why did the Chinese need America’s “permission”? Yet, such claims did not sound strange in the aftermath of World War II. After all, the United States won the war, and saved the world (it was believed). Why not save China? Even Walter Lippmann, one of the representative intellectuals of the day, did not hesitate to ask, “Why at the zenith of American power was American influence in China paralyzed?”¹³⁸ Beneath irritation of this kind underlay a strong sense of righteousness, which had been promoted during the war and consolidated after victory.

Second, the other side of such illusions of omnipotence and righteousness was the incapacitating of “others,” particularly Asians. As journalist Harold Isaacs observed, a large majority of Americans viewed China as “a country we have always helped” and the Chinese as “a people to be helped.”¹³⁹ If the Chinese did not act as Americans wished, they were simply considered “puppets of the Kremlin.”¹⁴⁰ Third, the basic worldview in which such a sense of omnipotence was grounded was the ideology of global geopolitics, which tended to make sweeping generalizations about the “world.” The image of geopolitics, to be sure, was as old as the history of war, but the point here is its extension in the aftermath of World War II, not just in terms of its geographic extent—global—but also in terms of its depth into diverse social

Rethinking the Origins of the U.S.-PRC Confrontation,” *Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 4 (Fall 1995): 249–78.

¹³⁸ “DSOD,” September 6, 1949, Box 3, OPOS, RG59, NA.

¹³⁹ Harold Isaacs, *Scratches on Our Minds: American Images of China and India* (New York: John Day Company, 1958), 193. See also T. Christopher Jespersen, *American Images of China, 1931-1949* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996).

¹⁴⁰ Similar view was used for Japan, too. See, for instance, “DSOD,” December 17, 1948, Box 3, OPOS, RG59, NA.

layers among millions of ordinary people. Such a seemingly international perspective simply assumed that what happened in one place should happen in the same way in other parts, as well, ignoring various local complications and historical contexts.¹⁴¹ Having fought and won the world war between “Fascism and Freedom” in Europe and Asia-Pacific, such a sweeping “global” view appeared natural and intelligible, although such a perspective was no more than a local belief in the United States.¹⁴²

When the China issue was reported on in the United States, the news was conveyed through these local lenses—that is, the ideology of international geopolitics, intense nationalism, and beliefs in omnipotence on the side of “us” and impotence on the side of “others.” This explains why anti-American student movements in China were almost completely ignored in the United States. To begin with, the ideology of geopolitics naturally presupposed conflicts between states, and made it difficult to see the development of internal decay and domestic discord. Thus, as internal opposition was simply viewed as the conduct of enemy agents, Chinese student movements were seen merely as a result of communist propaganda. In addition, this widespread sense of self-righteousness and nationalism made it difficult to listen to criticism from outside. Questions or protests shouted on the streets in China were viewed not as proper opinions to be considered but conduct instigated by the enemy. Finally, as the reverse side of the sense of omnipotence, “others” were assumed to be incapable, not proactive and subjective actors who had their own voices and thoughts; they were simply deemed either “people to be

¹⁴¹ See, for instance, “DSOD,” December 9, 1948, Box 3, OPOS, RG59, NA.

¹⁴² “DSOD,” December 9 and 17, 1948, Box 3; OPOS, RG59, NA.

helped” or “Kremlin puppets.” In short, the China issue was interpreted through such local contexts in the United States and “understood” accordingly. In a sense, reality did not really change understandings; rather, the frame of understandings shaped “reality.”

Various Futures Still Possible

There were differing viewpoints at this point, however. It would be simplistic to view American society as free of disagreements. In the case of reactions to the China issue, for instance, while the defeat of GMD forces in 1948 surely confirmed beliefs in the “spread of Communist influence in East Asia,” many observers—including scholars, journalists, politicians, and even everyday people—could openly argue against such a popular worldview. One example was Henry A. Wallace, former vice president under Franklin D. Roosevelt and the leader of the Progressive Party and candidate for the presidential elections in 1948. Having grown up in a farm village in Iowa, Wallace was an active protagonist of populist movements, proclaiming himself a true believer in “people.” While Henry Luce envisaged the “American Century,” Wallace imagined, as the title of his book indicated, “The Century of the Common Man.”¹⁴³ Thus, he passionately argued, “The Chinese fiasco illustrates the complete bankruptcy of U.S. foreign policy. Unless Chiang’s regime is replaced by a people’s government, [...] the great bulk of the Chinese people will hate the very words ‘America’ and ‘United States’ for generations to come.”¹⁴⁴

¹⁴³ Henry A. Wallace, *The Century of the Common Man* (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1943).

¹⁴⁴ Henry A. Wallace, “American Fiasco in China,” *New Republic*, July 5, 1948, 11.

Openly defying the notion of the Cold War and insisting on cooperation with people in China and the Soviet Union, the presence of Henry Wallace in the national political scene itself suggests the heterogeneity of American politics in the late 1940s.¹⁴⁵ While almost no one expected his victory in the 1948 elections, Wallace was not a minor bubble candidate; major newspapers and radio programs paid attention to and reported on him, which would scarcely be imaginable in the 1952 presidential elections.¹⁴⁶ Even given his bitter defeat, Wallace supporters did not suddenly disappear. Quite to the contrary, progressives in 1949 actually attempted to set a new tone in calling for a re-mobilization of the Progressive Party in preparation for the 1950 midterm elections.¹⁴⁷ While the party had suffered financial difficulties, its secretary could still say that “the spirit of our people is wonderful.”¹⁴⁸

By the same token, liberals and leftists were still able to publicly express opposition to mainstream viewpoints. Regarding the China issue, a major liberal magazine *The Nation*, for instance, could maintain in December 1948, “We must not be misled by pleas to ‘aid’ or to ‘save’ China,” arguing against the idea of giving military assistance to the GMD government, which “the Chinese people came to despise.”¹⁴⁹ Likewise, a renowned Harvard historian, John K. Fairbank, was able to

¹⁴⁵ Craig and Logevall, *America's Cold War*, 76-77; Robert David Johnson, *Congress and the Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), xvi-xvii.; Jonathan Bell, *The Liberal State on Trial: The Cold War and American Politics in the Truman Years* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 121-159; and Zachary Karabell, *The Last Campaign: How Harry Truman Won the 1948 Election* (New York: Knopf, 2000).

¹⁴⁶ Craig and Logevall, *America's Cold War*, 135.

¹⁴⁷ Memorandum, September 3, 1949, Papers of the Progressive Party (hereafter PPP), Folder 2, Box 1, Special Collection, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA (hereafter SCUI).

¹⁴⁸ Letter, C. B. Baldwin to Herman Wright, June 29, 1950, PPP, Folder 2, Box 1, SCUI.

¹⁴⁹ “DSOD,” December 16, 1948, Box 3, OPOS, RG59, NA.

urge readers to look at the actual situation in China: "The United States must make a distinction between the Chinese communist movement and the Chinese social revolution. This means that American policy must be to align ourselves more positively and actively with social change in China of the type we really believe in, even though we find ourselves running parallel to Chinese Communism."¹⁵⁰ Along the same lines, commentator Samuel Grafton was more explicit and went further in saying, "The funny thing is our relations with Communist China, far from provoking a new world war may, if we are smart and realistic, give us some valuable experience in how to get along with the Communist world."¹⁵¹

This kind of attitude, urging cooperation with Communist China was, in fact, not limited to liberals and progressives. Even the pro-Republican and pro-business magazine, *U.S. News and World Report*, observed in February 1949 that American recognition of Communist China was "ultimately to be expected."¹⁵² Similarly, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, often deemed one of the most hawkish "Cold Warriors," was actually considering in early 1949 recommending that the United States should eventually recognize Mao's regime.¹⁵³ Contrary to the later image of Dean Acheson as a primary architect of the global Cold War, the Acheson of early 1950 actually urged that Americans should not regard Asia in the same light as Europe—a suggestion which would be almost unimaginable for the Acheson of the

¹⁵⁰ "DSOD," December 30 1948, Box 3, OPOS, RG59, NA.

¹⁵¹ "DSOD," December 10 1948, Box 3, OPOS, RG59, NA.

¹⁵² "DSOD," February 3 1949, Box 3, OPOS, RG59, NA.

¹⁵³ Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 172.

years that followed, implying the existence of heterogeneity and flexibility in the political scene of the early postwar period.¹⁵⁴

Thus, it would be a mistake to simply view the period between 1945 and 1950 as a prelude, a transitional period leading to the era of the Cold War and McCarthyism. Because we know what happened in the years that followed, we tend to draw a straight line between such “similar” events over time. Yet, the explosion of anti-communist sentiment was neither predestined nor inevitable. Unlike the situation in the following years, acts of expressing disagreement and discontent were still quite common. Indeed, bearing in mind the extremes at the peak of McCarthyism in the early 1950s, anti-communist movements in the late-1940s were somehow different; they seem to have been rather nonchalant and even casual.

As discussed earlier, the first big wave of “anti-communist” movements in postwar America came with the defeat of the New Deal in the 1946 midterm election as domestic political tactics. No wonder that the new 80th Congress in January 1947 witnessed an explosion of anti-communist appeals and anti-State Department calls by several congressmen, mainly in the House of Representatives, such as Fred Busbey of Illinois, and Paul Shafer and Bartel Jonkman of Michigan.¹⁵⁵ Nevertheless, their claims did not really mark an era, which would inspire terms like “Busbeyism,” “Shaferism,” or “Jonkmanism,” despite the fact that their anti-communist and anti-State Department claims were almost identical to those of a Wisconsin Senator years later. Instead of making an epoch, they were criticized for

¹⁵⁴ Dean Acheson, Press Club Speech and his reply to questions, January 12, 1950, Papers of John S. Service (hereafter PJSS), Folder 2, Carton 2: “Secretary of State, Dean Acheson 1950-1965,” BANC MSS 87/21, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley (hereafter BLUC).

¹⁵⁵ “DSOD,” December 1946 to March 1947, Box 3, OPOS, RG59, NA.

their groundless allegations. The *Washington Star*, for instance, denounced one of them, Republican Paul Shafer, as making “reckless” claims, and declared that the congressman “offered not a shred of substantiating evidence for his insinuations.”¹⁵⁶

Actually, this was the kind of criticism Senator Joseph McCarthy, Republican of Wisconsin, faced in the spring of 1950. Although McCarthy gave his (in)famous speech in February, declaring that 205 communists had infiltrated the State Department, the Senator was initially more criticized than believed.¹⁵⁷ One White House staff member, for instance, observed in April 1950 that McCarthy was losing credibility because he could not offer any evidence.¹⁵⁸ Even Republican-friendly *Life* magazine castigated McCarthy, as did its sister publication *Time*. After ignoring his charges for two months, an editorial in *Life* insisted that there was a right way and a wrong way to fight Communism, and that McCarthy’s was the wrong one. “What you can best do for America and for American principles is not to join in the McCarthy lynching bee,” proclaimed the magazine. Likewise, the Congressional Subcommittee on the Investigation of Loyalty of State Department Employees, commonly known as the Tydings Committee, which was organized in March to investigate McCarthy’s charges, publicly concluded in early-June 1950 that not one of the persons accused was either a “disloyal employee or a Communist.”¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ “DSOD,” January 17 and 20, 1947, Box 3, OPOS, RG59, NA.

¹⁵⁷ Philip Jenkins, *Cold War At Home: The Red Scare in Pennsylvania, 1945-1960* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 9. The body of literature on this topic is enormous. For a brief literature review, see Chapter 7. For more detailed historiographical discussion, see Ellen Schrecker, “McCarthyism and the Red Scare,” in Jean-Christophe Agnew and Roy Rosenzweig, *A Companion to Post-1945 America* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 371-84.

¹⁵⁸ Eben A. Ayers, *Truman in the White House: The Diary of Eben A. Ayers*, Robert Ferrell ed. (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1991), April 29, 1950, 348-349.

¹⁵⁹ “McCarthy and the Past,” *Life*, April 10, 1950, 32; Memorandum, Millard Tydings to Harry S. Truman, June 5, 1950, Student Research File: “McCarthyism,” Box 1, Harry S. Truman Library,

By the same token, while the “anti-communist” wave had been spreading in higher education nationwide, it provoked protest rallies at the same time. To be sure, various universities, such as the University of Washington, Oregon State College, and Purdue University, had approved the firing of “communist” professors by late 1949.¹⁶⁰ At Cornell University, President Edmund Ezra Day asserted, “communists are not free mentally, not are they honest.”¹⁶¹ Yet, such “anti-communist” calls simultaneously triggered resistance, such as the one seen at the University of California, Berkeley, where reportedly more than 2,500 students and professors rallied in April of 1950 against the university’s policy of a loyalty oath for the entire faculty.¹⁶² Bearing in mind that these statements and activities became almost impossible at the peak of anticommunist sentiment in the early 1950s, the postwar years between late-1945 and early-1950 can be seen as a period before something fundamentally changed. Various versions of future still seemed possible and realistic in American society.

Such a statement was applicable in China at the beginning of 1950, as well. At the moment of its establishment, the People’s Republic of China was not yet a socialist or communist state. Nor did Beijing secure social, political, and economic

Independence, MO (hereafter HSTL).

¹⁶⁰ “University of Washington Fires 3 as Reds,” January 23, 1949, *San Francisco Examiner*; “Oregon Fires Teachers as ‘Not Free,’” February 24, 1950, *San Francisco Chronicle*; and “Purdue President Approves Firing of Communist Faculty Members,” March 22, 1949, *San Francisco Examiner*, Box 1, McCarthy Era Newspaper Clippings, M0186, Special Collections, Stanford University, Stanford, CA (hereafter SCSU). For detailed discussion on McCarthyism and higher education, see Ellen W. Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

¹⁶¹ “Cornell President Calls Reds Teachers Dishonest,” April 6, 1949, *San Francisco Examiner*. Box 1, SCSU.

¹⁶² “The Deadlock on UC Loyalty Oath” April 7, 1950, and “UC Student Rally Hears Faculty Stand,” April 12, 1950, *San Francisco Chronicle*, Box 1, McCarthy Era Newspaper Clippings, M0186; also, see, Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower*, 117-125.

control over the entire country from the outset. While the Chinese Communist Party, needless to say, took crucial and central roles, it did pay significant attention to bringing together diverse political forces beyond the party line. This was not just a pose to deflect criticism.¹⁶³ Also, it was not just a reflection of the intentions of Moscow.¹⁶⁴ Practically speaking, the CCP, which had grown out of and ruled primarily rural areas, lacked experiences in administrating cities, and would not be able to govern the entire country without cooperating with various non-communist forces, as well as ex-GMD officials and their former sympathizers. After all, as political scientist Kenneth Lieberthal summarized, China could be captured from the countryside but it could be governed only from the cities.¹⁶⁵ In short, to administer the country, the CCP had to soften its political agenda.

The ideas proclaimed at the time of the founding were, thus, based on the notion of New Democracy, not the Soviet communist model. As a matter of fact, Mao Zedong emphasized in early June 1950, “Some people believe that we can eliminate capitalism and achieve socialism immediately, but it is an error, and would not fit to the conditions of our country.”¹⁶⁶ The fact that quite a few non-communist leaders participated in the central and local governments demonstrates the same idea. The Beijing leadership recognized that it would take a “quite a long time”—perhaps 15

¹⁶³ Frederick C. Teiwes, “Establishing and Consolidating of the New Regime,” in Denis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank ed., *The Cambridge History of China Vol. 14: The People’s Republic of China, Part I: The Emergence of Revolutionary China, 1949-1965* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 77.

¹⁶⁴ Hua-yu Li, *Mao and Economic Stalinization of China, 1948-1953* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Pub., 2006), 3-4, 60-64.

¹⁶⁵ Kenneth Lieberthal, *Governing China: From Revolution through Reform* 2nd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2004 [1995]), 85.

¹⁶⁶ Mao Zedong, “Wei zhengqu guojia caizheng jingji zhuangkuang de jiben haozhuang er douzheng [Fundamental improvement and fight regarding the situations to win national finance and economy],” June 6, 1950, *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* [A Collected Works of Mao Zedong After the Establishment of the Country] Vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1987), 394.

years—before moving on to the nationalization of private industries and socialization of agriculture.¹⁶⁷ The radical shift in Beijing's policies that took place around 1951-1953 did not appear on the horizon yet. Nor was it ordained nor intended at the beginning of 1950. In other words, however short it was, the period between late 1949 and early 1950 was a moment before something fundamentally changed. As in the United States, the "reality" was still nebulous, and various version of future seemed possible in Chinese society, as well.

If nothing unusual had happened in the summer of 1950, the CCP might have continued to take on moderate policies both in rural and urban areas. Not having consolidated power yet, the Party's New Democracy lines would have lasted a little longer as scheduled, and the Beijing leadership might not have chosen radical agendas as it did after 1953. In fact, the radical revolution might have been slowed down, or even de-mobilized, as Liu Shaoqi repeatedly advised the cadres in Tianjin and other cities in 1949-1950.¹⁶⁸ To be sure, critiques and challenges toward such moderate policies began coming to the surface, and it is possible that such moderate policies might have been abandoned anyway, sooner or later. Even so, the rebound to the revolutionary line might be happened in a more soft-landing way, and the dark days of harsh and ruthless suppressions might not have come, or, at least, could have been postponed a little bit.

¹⁶⁷ Amako, *Chuka jinmin kyowa koku shi* [A History of the People's Republic of China], 16-18, 30; Kubo, *Shakai shugi heno chosen* [A Challenge for Socialism], 44, 68.

¹⁶⁸ Kenneth G. Lieberthal, *Revolution and Tradition in Tientsin, 1942-1952* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1980), 40-52; Ezra F. Vogel, *Canton Under Communism: Programs and Politics in a Provincial Capital, 1949-1968* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969), 95-97; Frederick C. Teiwes, "Establishing and Consolidating of the New Regime," 89.

Such “what if” history might be applicable to other societies, too. In Japan, for instance, the conservative backlash, which later called the Reverse Course, had already begun and various reform programs had been delayed or even begun fading away. However, such a current of backlash also functioned to renew opposition, particularly among the labor, youth, urbanites, and intellectuals, who had been seriously taking up postwar reforms. Workers continued to fight back. Students began lining up demonstrations against a series of conservative rebounds, describing those as a return to wartime. Many intellectuals also actively participated in public debates, mapping out and publicizing their own agendas for the future of their country, as Maruyama Masao and a group of intellectuals announced their vision for unarmed neutrality. If nothing unusual happened in the summer of 1950, these substantial struggles and weighty debates in Japan might have continued for much longer, possibly restricting the Yoshida administration’s policy of a separate peace and military alliance with the United States. Nor would Japan have conducted re-armament, which it began in July 1950, establishing the National Police Reserve. By the same token, in Europe, Germany’s re-armament might have been similarly delayed much longer due to persistent opposition from France, which actually changed its attitude in the summer of 1950. Various international alliances of the day, such as NATO, thus, would have developed considerably differently from the ways they did.

Within the United States, too, if nothing unusual happened in the summer of 1950, the dark days of McCarthyism might not have come, or, at least, could have been postponed for some time. The name of McCarthy might be forgotten, like those

of many of his colleagues, such as Paul Shafer of Michigan. Children might not have needed to practice air raids drills in elementary schools, with the comical song, “Duck and Cover.”¹⁶⁹ Nor would children in New York State have had to wear identification tags in case of their deaths from an atomic attack.¹⁷⁰ Perhaps, Mike Hammer, the main character in best-selling hard-boiled fiction, would not have needed to change his targets from street gangs to “Commies.”¹⁷¹ Likewise, Hollywood might not have felt the need to mass-produce tales of the red scare, which it did, producing about 200 such films in 1951-1953. Furthermore, the NSC-68, which historian Walter LaFeber called the “American blueprint for waging the Cold War,” might have been shelved and not seen the light of day. The Cold War, above all, might not have been conventionalized, remaining merely one disputable worldview, if nothing unusual happened in the summer of 1950. With the cooling down of the Berlin blockade in 1949, the situation we now call the Cold War in the second-half of the twentieth century might have been developed to a situation called “Cold Peace.” To be an irrefutable “reality” of the world, the particular worldview of the Cold War needed to be *socially* accepted by the large majority of the population all over the world.

Yet, such something happened thousands of miles from the United States and from Europe. The event itself might not have been as significant as many people thought at that time. It *became* important because millions and millions of people

¹⁶⁹ Federal Civil Defense Administration, *Bert the Turtle Says Duck and Cover* (Washington D.C: GPO, 1950).

¹⁷⁰ JoAnne Brown, “‘A is for Atom, B is Bomb’: Civil Defense in American Public Education, 1948-1963.” *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 75, No.1 (June 1988).

¹⁷¹ Mickey Spillane, *The Mike Hammer collection* (New York: New American Library, 2001).

imagined it so, because it brought back many people's memories of World War II, because it made them fear a possible World War III with atomic attacks, and, finally, because it significantly modified local contexts almost everywhere in the world, combining various fragmented local struggles under the imagined reality of the Cold War. That event, which eventually triggered the social and political consolidation of the Cold War paradigm at home and abroad, was, of course, the full-scale outbreak of the Korean War on June 25, 1950.

Chapter 1: Pictures

Pictures 1

Picture 1: "United Packinghouse workers demonstrating against layoff"
1946
United States
Life Pictures



Source: <http://images.google.com/hosted/life/f?imgurl=b3eff8659848e944>
Photographer : Wallace Kirkland

Picture 2:

“Crowds during May Day Celebration”

May 1, 1946

Tokyo, Japan

Life Pictures



May Day Celebration In Tokyo, 1946, A square building in the back is the Dai-ichi Seimei Building , which was requisitioned for the use of the SCAP. *Life*.

Source: <http://images.google.com/hosted/life/l?imgurl=95e442adacd9eccd>
Photographer : Alfred Eisenstaedt

Picture 3-1:

“Students from Chiao Tung Univ. during Anti-American demonstration, heavily armed police try to keep peace,”

June 1948

Shanghai, China

Time and Life Pictures



Source: <http://images.google.com/hosted/life/l?imgurl=f2bd4f70aaffaa1d>

Photographer: Jack Birns

Picture 3-2:

**"Students from Chiao Tung Univ. during Anti-American demonstration,"
June 1948
Shanghai, China
Time and Life Pictures**



Source: <http://images.google.com/hosted/life/l?imgurl=ef05e9a20e631ab7>
Photographer: Jack Birns

Picture 4:
“Anti-American posters at Chiao Tung Univ.”
June 1948, Shanghai, China
Time and Life Pictures



The top drawing depicts a Japanese soldier killing a Chinese female and child, and the bottom one illustrates a scene an American releasing a Japanese soldier.

Source: <http://images.google.com/hosted/life/l?imgurl=32d90d1f8ce79c52>

Photographer: Jack Birns

Picture 5:

Feibao
October 24, 1947
Shanghai, China



Chapter 2: Local Translation

Like sailing, gardening, politics, and poetry, law and ethnography are crafts of place: they work by the light of local knowledge. [...]. Whatever else anthropology and jurisprudence may have in common—vagrant erudition and a fantastical air—they are alike absorbed with the artisan task of seeing broad principles in parochial facts. “Wisdom,” as an African proverb has it, “comes out of an ant heap.”¹

Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge* (1983)

The Outbreak of the War

Captain Joseph Darrigo awoke before dawn on Sunday morning on June 25, 1950 to the sound of artillery shells whistling over his head. The only American officer on the north edge of the old capital of Kaesong (Gaeseong) just south of the 38th Parallel, the captain jumped from his bed, clad only in his trousers, and ran from the house. Once outside, Darrigo leapt into a jeep and drove south into Kaesong. His car came under arms fire upon reaching the center of town, but he managed to escape without injury, and thus got out of town and continued southward. In few hours, without much fighting, Kaesong was occupied by forces of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea [hereafter North Korea].² Only forty miles to the south, the fall of Seoul followed in a similar manner within few days. The Information Bureau of the Republic of Korea [hereafter South Korea] broadcast over radio on June 27 that all government staff, from President Yi Sung-man (Yi Seung-man) on down, were at their desks as usual, and that the congress likewise had decided that the capital was to be defended at all costs, appealing to citizens of

¹ Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York, 1983).

² Robert Sawyer, *Military advisors in Korea: KMAC in Peace and War* (Washington DC, 1962), 115.

Seoul to trust their government and to defend their own workplaces to the last.³ This was, however, not true. The president had already evacuated Seoul before dawn on that day, almost completely unnoticed. Discovering this fact in the morning, high-ranking officials and statesmen hurriedly left Seoul, as well.⁴ By the morning of June 28, North Korean forces had occupied the capital and their flags fluttered at poles everywhere. In a mood of panic, South Korean forces blew up the huge, 0.7-mile-long, Han River Bridge in hopes of stopping North Korean forces at the river. However, at that point, the majority of South Korean forces were still to the north of the river. Much worse, when the dynamite exploded and the bridge shattered, many cars and people were still on the bridge, evacuating southward from Seoul. In an instant, all hell broke loose in the river. One American official estimated that five to eight hundred people died in moments; another said that more than four thousand were on the bridge at that time.⁵

Tragedies of this kind immediately following North Korea's attack have been described repeatedly in mainstream historical narratives of the Korean War. In line with this, in South Korea, the conflict has traditionally been called "The 6.25 War," stressing how unexpected North Korean attack was, how unprepared South Korean and American forces were, and how confusedly and desperately people escaped from the conflict that suddenly broke out on the day of June 25, 1950—an image of

³ Kim Song-chil, *Souru no jinmingun: Chosen Senso ka ni ikita rekishi gakusha no nikki* [The People's Army in Seoul: The Diary of a Historian who Lived Under the Korean War] (Tokyo, 1996), 21. Kim Song-chil kept his diary until he was killed in 1951.

⁴ Park, Myung-lim, *Sensō to Heiwa: Chōsen Hantō 1950* [War and Peace: The Korean Peninsula 1950] Yoshinobu Mori trans (Tōkyō: Shakai Hyōronsha, 2009), 131.

⁵ Kim Dong-choon (Tong-ch'un). *Chōsen Sensō no Shakaishi : Hinan, Senryō, Gyakusatsu* [A Social History of the Korean War: Evacuation, Occupation, Massacre] (Tōkyō: Heibonsha, 2008), 124-25.

which fits perfectly with the conventional narrative of the Korean War as the first “hot” war of the Cold War.⁶

Nonetheless, much more has to be examined and explained. There were, in fact, far more diverse reactions and interpretations immediately following North Korea’s attack. Many people, needless to say, received a shock, hurriedly fleeing from Seoul to the south (Picture 1). Yet, many other people, especially those who had been engaged in student, peasant, or various kinds of leftist movements, and thus had been harshly suppressed under the Yi Sung-man government, North Korea’s attack did not particularly signify a moment of evacuation; it appeared, at least in the beginning, as the start of a “good” era.⁷ One student in Seoul wrote excitedly immediately after the attack:

Finally, the despot Yi Sungman is kicked out from Seoul. Usurping dictatorial power through taking mean advantage of people’s ignorance and inability, Yi Sungman is the enemy of our people. How exhilarating if he will be chastised even just once. Yi Sungman’s country is a country of torture. We have to record his torture, so that it will be remembered by later generations.⁸

Still, however, many others were not nearly so enthusiastic about North Korea’s invasion. Nor were they particularly surprised about nor afraid of the outbreak of the war. Kim Song-chil (Kim Seong-chil), a history professor at National Seoul University, wrote in his diary after coming back from a walk with his children on June 28:

⁶ The nature of the Korean War has been the focal point of scholarship for decades. See, for instance, Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War* (Princeton, 1981-1990); Allan Millet, *The War for Korea* (Lawrence, KS, 2005-2010); William Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History* (Princeton, 1995); Sergei Goncharov et al., *Uncertain Partners : Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War* (Stanford, 1993). For Koreans’ various responses, see Kim Dong-choon, *Chōsen Sensō no Shakaishi* and Park Myung-lim, *Sensō to Heiwa: Chōsen Hantō 1950*.

⁷ Kim Song-chil, July 2, 1950, 38.

⁸ Kim Dong-choon, 138.

[The North Korean soldiers] have a hard northwestern accent, but they are our kind, sharing language, customs, and blood. Somehow they do not look like the enemy. They look more like brothers who left home and lived far away, just making a visit after a long absence. Nobody feels enmity when seeing them smiling and talking calmly.⁹

Kim Song-chil's attitude was not particularly exceptional. As sociologist Kim Dong-choon points out, residents of Seoul and peasants in neighboring areas were not necessarily in a panic, and the large majority of them decided to stay.¹⁰ As a matter of fact, when news of the invasion arrived at the capital and the radio broadcast a command for military officials to return to their troops, a baseball game continued playing at Seoul Stadium.¹¹

Fear of World War III

The moment of attack was shared on the other side of the earth almost immediately. Viewed from the United States, however, the situation looked far more grim, because North Korea's attack was assumed to be a direct challenge from Moscow, against which Americans should stand firmly. Although many Americans might not have known much about the Korean Peninsula, details of geography or culture did not really matter. The significant point was that the "enemy" had come to attack. Based on this view, many Americans took to their pens, sending messages to the president. In just four days following the North Korean attack, the White House received approximately 900 telegrams and 276 letters, which, like a flood, continued to arrive every single day for the next several months, with the majority asking the

⁹ Kim Song-chil, June 28, 1950, 26.

¹⁰ Kim Dong-choon categorizes this ruling circles as including, for instance, military, police, and government officials, as well as ex-Japanese collaborators, businessmen, landowners, Christians, and refugees from the North. Kim Dong-choon, 109-110, 166.

¹¹ Ibid, 109-110.

president to take a tougher stance, some proudly and others more in a panic.¹² A

man in Indianapolis wrote a letter to the White House on July 25:

Communism is a bad thing and must be met with strong measures, since that is the only thing they understand or respect. [...] I'm convinced that we are never going to have any peace until that "hell hole" in Russia is cleared out. Let's take the offensive. We have been sitting back waiting and spending ourselves into bankruptcy, the Russians definitely have the upper hand in this sort of game. The longer we wait the stronger they will get and by the same token we will grow weaker.¹³

Similarly, an Oklahoma man, urged: "Dear Mr. Truman. I don't know much about the war but I want to know what you think of this. Why don't you load up a few B-29s with Atomic Bombs, fly over to Russia and let them drop. It's an awful thing to do. But if we don't do it first Russia will."¹⁴ A mother in Plainfield, New Jersey, resolutely informed the president: "My husband served overseas in the second war. My son is 1A Plus for the third if the blunders of Manchuria, Ethiopia, and Czechoslovakia are repeated."¹⁵

Glancing over hundreds of these letters, one would easily notice that the majority never mention "Korea" at all. Most, instead, focus on the "Kremlin" and "Stalin," implying that many Americans assumed that the Korean War began with Soviet forces' invasion on June 25, 1950, and that North Koreans were viewed merely as tools of Moscow, with North Korea's attack seen as having been made at

¹² Memorandum, From William J. Hassett to Charles Ross, 29 June 1950, Harry S. Truman Papers (Hereafter HSTP), Official File: 471-B, Korean Emergency. Harry S. Truman Library (hereafter HSTL), Independence, MO; Paul G. Pierpaoli, Jr. *Truman and Korea: The Political Culture of the Early Cold War* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 36.

¹³ Letter, J. L. Showalter to Harry S. Truman (hereafter HST), July 25, 1950, HSTP: Official File, 471-B, Miscellaneous. HSTL, Independence, MO.

¹⁴ Letter, Jimmy Balter to HST, June 27, 1950, HSTP: Official File, 471-B, Miscellaneous, HSTL, Independence, MO.

¹⁵ Letter, Jean Cottrell Fleischman to HST, June 26, 1950, HSTP: Official File, 471-B, Miscellaneous, HSTL, Independence, MO.

the instruction of Joseph Stalin (Picture 2).¹⁶ While significant numbers of people disagreed with this viewpoint as this chapter examines below, in general, many viewed the Korean War as part of the Kremlin's "carefully laid scheme," which meant for many Americans, the opening phase of war between the USSR and the United States.¹⁷ *Chicago Daily News* journalist Keyes Beech's observation on July 1, 1950, therefore, appeared neither strange nor absurd when he reported back from Seoul: "I have a feeling that I have just witnessed the beginning of World War III."¹⁸

The initial strategy of the United States concerning the outbreak of the Korean War was formulated within such an environment. Just enjoying a vacation in his hometown, Independence, Missouri, on the night of June 24, President Harry S. Truman at its very outset did not see the situation as a burning issue. Rather, he remarked to an aide that he would not cut short his visit to Independence "unless something developed," because it would alarm the people.¹⁹ What changed his attitude by the next morning, however, were close communications with officials and politicians in Washington, including a telephone conversation with Dean Acheson and a forwarded memo from John Foster Dulles, a Republican and advisor to the president, who was, coincidentally, visiting Seoul and Tokyo at that time, and

¹⁶ Political cartoon, "Push-Button Warfare," *U.S. News and World Report* (21 July 1950), 12; Also a similar cartoon appeared in "Where Next?" *Ithaca Journal* (8 July 1950).

¹⁷ Drew Pearson, "President Needs All Help in Crisis," 24 July 1950, *Washington Post*. Some magazines, for example, *U.S. News and World Report*, again and again warned of the possibility that World War III would occur in August 1950 in their August 11th and 18th issues.

¹⁸ Steven Casey, *Selling the Korean War: Propaganda, Politics, and Public Opinion in the United States, 1950-1953* (New York, 2008), 43.

¹⁹ Eben Ayers Diary, June 25, 1950, in Robert Ferrell ed., *Truman in the White House: The Diary of Eben A. Ayers* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri, 1991), 353. Washington's swift and decisive decision to dispatch U.S. forces to Korea and the Taiwan Strait has been well known. For example, Glenn Paige, *The Korean Decision: June 24-30, 1950* (New York: The Free Press, 1968), and William Stueck, *The Korean War*.

frankly recommended that Washington use military forces in Korea.²⁰ Having had communications with officials in Washington, Truman quickly modified his stance, asserting, “If we are tough enough now [...], they won’t take any next steps. But if we just stand by, they’ll move into” other parts of the world in the future.²¹ Interpreting North Korea’s attack as a clear sign of communist aggression controlled by Moscow, the Truman administration decided to dispatch U.S. forces to Korea and the Taiwan Strait.²²

In the People’s Republic of China, the outbreak of the Korean War itself was not big news, but America’s intervention in Korea and the Taiwan Strait created complex repercussions. Immediately following the American intervention, rumors in the northeast maintained that “Chiang Kai-shek has already landed nine divisions in South Korea. Now both American and Japanese forces have entered the war, and World War III will be inescapable. Shenyang cannot avert air raids.”²³ In Tianjin, a rumor at the end of June predicted that a world war would begin in the following September. In Kunming, in southwest China, local rumors had it that Ho Chi Minh had already evacuated from Vietnam to Yunnan Province, that American forces would attack China from Vietnam, and that Chiang Kai-shek had been flown to Tibet to command counterrevolutionary forces.²⁴ In Chongqing, one landlord suddenly

²⁰ Telegram, John Foster Dulles and John Allison to Dean Acheson and Dean Rusk, 25 June 1950, George M. Elsey Papers (hereafter GMEP), Subject File, Box 71, HSTL; “Acheson, Dean 1950,” Box 47, Seeley Mudd Manuscript Library (hereafter SMML), Princeton University, Princeton, NJ.

²¹ “President Truman’s Conversation with George M. Elsey,” 26 June 1950, GMEP, Subject File, Box 71, HSTL, Independence, MO.

²² “Statement by the President,” 27 June 1950, GMEP, Subject File, Box 71, HSTL, Independence, MO.

²³ “Shenyang ge jiecheng dui Chaoxian zhanzheng de fanying [Reactions of various sections in Shenyang toward the Korean War],” July 13, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, Chinese University of Hong Kong [hereafter CUHK], Hong Kong, PRC.

²⁴ “Guo neiwai dui Chaoxian zhanzheng he Chaoxian tanpan fanying [Responses at home and abroad

stop renting his property in mid-July; it turned out that he foresaw a rise in housing rents because many people living in the lower Yangtze River would have to evacuate to Chongqing following the outbreak of a general war.²⁵ In the Hualing district of Shanghai, locals gossiped that the Communist Party would have no way to survive if a world war were to break out, whispering that the CCP's signature collecting campaigns would be no use at all.²⁶

Because of such fears of World War III, commodity prices quickly rose in most cities throughout China, while stock prices in Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin fell quickly.²⁷ In Tianjin, for instance, stock prices plummeted nearly a half, while observing the shot up of gold price 133 percent in the first week following the U.S. intervention in the Korean War.²⁸

Observing the situation immediately following the American intervention into the Korean War, a communist official in Rehe, in northeast China, lamented, in a report written on July 22, 1950:

The people's minds appear to be in a state of sheer terror. Ordinary people do not trust the value of our paper money any more, rushing to buy gold and silver, leading to a surge in gold prices. People do not believe in our news reports of the victory of North Korean forces. [...]. There have been fears of [America's] atomic attack, which

toward the Korean War and the Korean armistice],” July 14, 1950, No. 116-00085-01, Foreign Ministry Archives (hereafter FMA), Beijing, PRC.

²⁵ “Chongqing gongshang, wenhuajie dui shiju de fanying [Responses in business and literacy circles in Chongqing toward the current political situation],” July 24, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

²⁶ “Zhonggong Shanghaishi jiaoqu gongzuo weiyuanhui guanyu Shanghaishi Hualongqu heping qianming yundong de gongzuo jianbao [CCP rural workings committee on peace signature campaigns at Hualong district in Shanghai],” July 16, 1950, A71-2-56-9, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.

²⁷ See various entries from local committee in early July 1950 in *Neibu cankao*, such as “Dulumen shengming fabiao hou Shanghai shichang qingkuang [The situation of the Shanghai market following the announcement of Truman statement],” July 1, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

²⁸ “Jing-shi gongshang jie dui muqian shiju fanying [The reactions toward current affairs among business circle in Tianjin],” July 5, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

have caused some to forecast the end, resulting in parties of heavy drinking and eating in some areas. Some say, "Let's drink today all liquor we have today."²⁹

Reactions of this kind were not the single mode of response. In addition to the aforementioned feelings of fears and concerns, many people remained indifferent, while others hardened anti-American and anti-colonial sentiments as we will examine in detail below. Still, there were quite a few who were thrilled with the news. For those who had been skeptical, or even antagonistic, toward the communist regime, America's intervention into Korea and the Taiwan Strait appeared as a rare opportunity to fight back.

If anyone found a chance in this way, perhaps, no one exceeded the degree of zeal of members and sympathizers of the Nationalist Party (GMD) in Taiwan, who had evacuated the mainland only about half a year before. Chiang Kai-shek, for instance, wrote in his diary on July 1: "The United States has already started World War III. For the purpose of our counteroffensive to the mainland, we need to study ways in which we can support South Korea."³⁰ Two days later, Chiang made a speech in Taipei, declaring that the Korean War would be an opportunity not only to form a framework of cooperation between the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the United States, but also to form an alliance in East Asia against the threat of communism.³¹

Along this line, the Korean War, defined by the Nationalist Party, appeared as a part

²⁹ "Rehe, Jinzhou deng di ganbu qunzhong dui Chaoxian zhanshi de fanying [Reactions of cadres and people in Rehe and Jinzhou toward the Korean War]," July 22, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

³⁰ Chiang Kai-shek, Diary, July 1, 1950, Box 48, Chiang Kai-shek Diary (hereafter CKSD), Hoover Institute, Stanford University, Stanford, CA.

³¹ Chiang Kai-shek, "Hanzhan yu shijie jushi [The Korean War and World Situations], July 3, 1950" in *Fangong kang-E zhong de Jiang zongtong* [Generalissimo Chiang in the Opposing Communism and Resisting Russia (Movements of)], 42, Dangshiguan [Nationalist Party Archives] (hereafter NPA), Taipei, Taiwan; ""Zhongyang zhixing weiyuanhui tonggao [Announcement of the Central Committee of the Nationalist Party]," June 30, 1950, 6-41-87: Central Reform Committee Archive, Zhongguo Guomindang Records, Hoover Institute, Stanford University, CA. 18).

of the larger battles between Russians and Asians. The official GMD organ, *Zhongyang Ribao*, for example, editorialized that the outbreak of the war signified “another” invasion of Russian Imperialism in Asia, arguing that it should be seen as a struggle between the Chinese people and Russian Imperialism, not that of Taiwan versus Mainland China.³² Viewed in this way, the outbreak of the Korean War marked a golden opportunity for Taiwan, with the United States on its side. On the same day he made his speech, Chiang Kai-shek actually informed MacArthur in full of high spirits that Taiwan could dispatch land troops to South Korea within five days.³³

One poet expressed such fervent hopes in a poem, entitled “A Signal of July,” immediately after the American intervention in Korea and the Taiwan Strait. It read:

In the season of dense cloud
A thunderbolt with anger
 sounds across the low sky of July
A storm has come
It is a signal
 not a prophecy
Vibrant days
Spirited hearts
Every depressed life
 all becomes amazed and exuberant
The song we passionately sing
 thunders out in July
We will find a fruit
 that the storm shall drop off.³⁴

³² “Edi you yi qinlue xingdong [Russia’s another invasion again],” Editorial, *Zhongyang Ribao*, June 26, 1950; and “Weihe hanjian biwang qinlue bi bai,” [Why traitor loses and invasion fails] in *Gaizao [Reform]* No. 5 (November 1, 1950), 101-4, Nationalist Party Archives, Taipei, Taiwan.

³³ Memorandum, Chiang Kai-shek to Douglas MacArthur, July 3, 1950, File 3A, Box 6, RG6: Records of General Headquarters, Far East Command, MacArthur Memorial Archives (hereafter MMA), Norfolk, VA.

³⁴ Guo Sifen, “Haichao [Sea Tide]” in Ge Xianning ed., *Fan Gong Kang E Shixuan* (Taipei, 1952), 41-42. National Taiwan University Library, Taipei, Taiwan.

Needless to say, such delighted reactions appeared only among Nationalist Party members and sympathizers who had just evacuated from the mainland. For them, the Korean War should not be a local war in Korea; it should be part of a global war, in which they had been taking part, and which would be a certain “signal” of fighting back, not an untrustworthy “prophecy.”

Because the moment appeared to be such a rare opportunity for a counterattack, some even felt irritated with the pace of the United States. His offer of sending troops to Korea rejected by Washington, Chiang Kai-shek became increasingly impatient and distrustful toward the United States, which reached the peak by late July: “For these three years the United States has abandoned China, and taken a policy of supporting Japan. That policy in China and East Asia continues now. That is America’s crude and shortsighted strategy in East Asia. How can such a country lead the world?”³⁵

Hopes and disappointments of this kind appear to have been shared on the other side of the earth. In Sofia, Bulgaria, for example, a British diplomat discerned a “good deal of excitement” among local residents immediately following the U.S. intervention in Korea. According to his observation, some Bulgarians who bitterly opposed to the communist regime but saw no chance of upsetting it without a general upheaval were talking in elated and vengeful terms of such an upheaval having just begun.³⁶ As in Taiwan, much disappointment was observed among such Bulgarians, because an American radio program, the Voice of America, retained a

³⁵ Chiang Kai-shek, Diary, July 27, 1950, Box 48, CKSD, Hoover Institute, Stanford University, Stanford, CA.

³⁶ Telegram (From Sofia, Bulgaria, to Foreign Office, UK), July 4, 1950, in “Bulgarian reactions to situation in Korea,” FO371/87567, British National Archives (hereafter BNA), Kew, UK.

low tone, instead of making bold and sensational comments.³⁷ Still, rumors in Rumania in mid-July maintained that regular transport of guns westward was observed in Galati, situated in the Danube; that Russia had already demanded that Rumania invade Yugoslavia; and that there was “evidence” of road and rail movements of Rumanian and Russian troops near Bucharest.³⁸ In a fearful and suspicious frame of mind, the Norwegian Ambassador inquired of a British minister: “[A]ny information to suggest that Russians were making preparations [...] elsewhere?”³⁹

Amid this climate of impending world war, even trivial daily occurrences appeared extremely serious. This was because there was a certain “common sense” about the situation—that North Korea’s attack was made under Stalin’s orders, that the Russians chose Korea merely as a test point, and that there could be, or must be, a similar and larger attack on Europe.⁴⁰ In short, many in Western Europe feared that the Korean War was merely a feint operation before a Russian attack on Europe, which could lead a general war between the East and West camps, or the outbreak of World War III. That is why, like the Norwegian Ambassador, the Greek Ambassador in London enquired with the British Foreign Office in July about whether they had any information concerning Soviet intentions toward Greece.⁴¹

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ See, for instance, Telegram (From Bucharest, Rumania, to Foreign Office, UK), July 15, 1950, in “Rumors of Rumanian war preparation,” FO371/88073, BNA, Kew, UK.

³⁹ Memorandum, “Conversation between the Minister of State and the Norwegian Ambassador,” June 29, 1950, in FO371/86538: “Norwegian Attitude towards Events in Korea,” BNA.

⁴⁰ Memorandum (From Hague, Netherlands, to Foreign Office, UK), July 17, 1950, in “Netherlands reaction to events in Korea and to world political moves relating to this crisis,” FO371/89330, BNA, Kew, UK; Also, “Conversation between the Minister of State (UK) and the Norwegian Ambassador,” June 29, 1950, in “Norwegian attitude towards events in Korea,” FO371/86538, BNA, Kew, UK.

⁴¹ Memorandum, “Greece’s attitude to Korea and decision to send a battalion there,” July 22, 1950, in

That is why many Swedish and other neighboring countries' youth appealed to Joseph Stalin, not the North Koreans or Kim Il-sung (Kim Il-seong), to stop the Korean War in a rally held at Skarpnack, near Stockholm, Sweden, in the same month.⁴² And that is why many in European countries perceived the Korean War as a warning for the defense of Europe in case of another world war, a way of thinking that opened the door for the re-armament of West Germany.⁴³

Based on this viewpoint, a daily newspaper in the Netherlands, *Het Binnenhof*, editorialized in mid July:

The conclusion is that the West will have to direct all its energies to the strengthening of its defences, even though the war is not yet warm in the West. The people of the West, in their peace illusion, have dwelt too much on the past, with the result that Bonn and Tokyo still have no armies of their own with which if the necessity should arise to assist in the defence of Western democracy. If Korea teaches us that we have a lot to do in a short space of time, and if we react accordingly, it is possible that in the long run the Korean conflict will have had a beneficial influence.⁴⁴

Observing the development of discussions of European defense, a special correspondent for the Japanese *Asahi Shinbun* reported from Paris on July 29 that the war in Korea had been dominating the front pages of French newspapers for more than a month, adding that it had been a long time, if ever before, since Europeans paid such careful and continuous attention to the Far East. The

FO371/87710: "Korea Situation: Greek Government," BNA

⁴² Memorandum (From Stockholm, Sweden, to Foreign Office, UK), July 19, 1950, in "Norwegian attitude towards events in Korea," FO371/86538, BNA, Kew, UK.

⁴³ "London Press Service: Diplomatic Summary," August 22, 1950, in "China: political Situation," DO133/22, BNA, Kew, UK; Memorandum, Allen W. Dulles to John F. Dulles, "Memo from Conrad Adenauer," September 8, 1950, Papers of John Foster Dulles, Box 47, Mudd Library, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey; also, for detailed discussion on West Germany's re-armament, see, for example, Otake Hideo, *Saigunbi to Nashonarizumu* [Rearmament and Nationalism] (Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1988), 18-22.

⁴⁴ Memorandum (From Hague, Netherlands, to Foreign Office, UK), July 17, 1950, in "Netherlands reaction to events in Korea and to world political moves relating to this crisis," FO371/89330, BNA, Kew, UK.

correspondent concluded, “With the incident occurring in a remote peninsular in the Far East, Europe is keeping step with the world, and opened a new page of postwar history.”⁴⁵

Just across the sea from the burning peninsula, Japan, too, opened a new page of postwar history with the outbreak of the Korean War. Immediately following the North Korean attack, some experienced soldiers reportedly volunteered for the support of South Korea. Radicals, on the other hand, responded that the same pattern would occur in Japan in the near future. They happily spread rumors that the People’s Liberation Army was approaching, and would conquer Japan in a few years.⁴⁶ A renowned intellectual, Takeuchi Yoshimi, succinctly summarized the atmosphere at that moment: “In the year of 1950, war and revolution was not prediction but reality. The People’s Republic of China was established in the previous year, and the Korean War occurred in that year. Many believed a revolution in Japan was inevitable. I wonder that no one at that time expected tranquility ten years hence.”⁴⁷

Like in Europe, such a turbulent mood boosted discussions of Japan’s re-armament, which became the central issue in the years that followed. Within weeks of North Korea’s attack, a renowned international law scholar, Yokota Kisaburo, for instance, wrote an article, titled “The Crisis of World War III and National Security of Japan,” arguing that the attack should not be seen solely as North Korea’s action,

⁴⁵ “Chosen no doran to Oushu [The War in Korea and Europe],” July 29, 1950, *Asahi Shinbun*.

⁴⁶ Letter, Chiba Kiyoshi to Ashida Hitoshi, Papers of Ashida Hitoshi (hereafter PAH), Correspondence File, No. 266. National Diet Library; *Asahi Shinbun*, July 5, 1950.

⁴⁷ Oguma Eiji, Oguma Eiji, “*Minshu*” to “*Aikoku*”: *Sengo Nihon no nashonarismu to kokyosei* [“Democracy” and Patriotism: Nationalism and Publicness in Postwar Japan] (Tokyo, 2002), 342.

that World War III was possible, and that Japan would need to establish a concept of national defense in a “realistic” manner.⁴⁸ Yokota’s view was backed by conservatives, such as Baba Tsunego, president of *Yomiuri Shinbun*, who frankly wrote that “The roar of gunfire in Korea awoke us from a five-year dream of peace in Japan. [...]. Nobody can guarantee that Japan will not experience the same fate when we see the North Korean army’s surprise attack, as well as wartime chaos in Korea today.”⁴⁹

Amid such a radicalization and polarization of political viewpoints following the outbreak of the Korean War, those disappointed were a group of people, including both conservatives and leftists, who had been advocating the unarmed neutrality of Japan and its comprehensive peace treaty concerning World War II. Some, of course, continued to argue, or even radicalized, the same line, but many thought that the line would not be able to hold anymore. For them, a world war between the two camps, the possibility of which they had dismissed, was occurring a stone’s throw from Japan. One popular intellectual, Shimizu Ikutaro, lost patience, writing only few words in his diary on the day after the attack:

“What nonsense.”⁵⁰

He later recalled that he felt absurd because all of his efforts for the unarmed neutrality of Japan and its comprehensive peace treaty had come to nothing since, he believed, the basic premise of US-USSR coexistence was undercut with the

⁴⁸ Yokota Kisaburo, “Dai san ji sekai taisen no kiki to Nihon no anzen hoshō [The Crisis of World War III and the National Security of Japan],” *Yomiuri Shinbun*, July 30, 1950.

⁴⁹ Baba, Tsunego, “Five Years Since the End of the War,” *Yomiuri Shinbun*, August 13, 1950.

⁵⁰ Shimizu Ikutaro, “Waga jinsei no danpen [Scraps of My Life],” in *Shimizu Ikutaro chosaku shu [The Collection of Shimizu Ikutaro]*, Vol. 14 (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1993), 337.

outbreak of the Korean War. “The co-existence,” he wrote, “was destroyed by the Socialist forces.”⁵¹

Yokota and Shimizu’s statements appeared neither peculiar nor off base from the “common” view at that time. In Tokyo, in Shanghai, in Taipei, In Chicago, in Sofia, in Athens, in the Hague, and in many places of throughout the world, millions of people would have agreed that they were witnessing the opening of a general war between the USSR and the United States, which meant, for many, the beginning of World War III. As such, Nobel-prize winning British philosopher Bertrand Russell felt able to declare solemnly his prophecy at the end of June 1950: “The world has already entered the first phase of a global crush. If war breaks out, it flares up both in Asia and Europe simultaneously.”⁵²

Local Needs: Nation Building

The discourse of World War III, however, was more a figment of the imagination and product of fear than reality, as was the world of the Cold War that was established on the former. It was based more on existing frameworks of understanding founded on experiences and memories of World War II and other local historical contexts than actual situations in Korea at that time. In fact, as recent studies have shown, Stalin did not *order* Kim Il-sung to attack the South with the aim of inciting World War III, although he was surely responsible for irresponsibly *accepting* Kim’s persistent pleas.⁵³ The primary propelling force for North Korea’s

⁵¹ Ibid, 338.

⁵² Bertrand Russell, Sun, Sydney, June 29, 1950. Quoted in *Mainichi Shinbun*, July 1, 1950.

⁵³ Contents of communications among Stalin, Mao, and Kim have been well-examined and published

invasion, among many other factors, was not so much Joseph Stalin, as widely believed at that time and since, but Kim Il-sung, who had been advocating a concept of “*Namjin* [Southward March]” for years.⁵⁴ Except for a few ebullient rhetorical slogans, Stalin, in his actual behavior and policymaking, remained cautious in not inciting war with Western forces in either Europe or Asia, in particular avoiding a direct confrontation with the United States.⁵⁵ President Truman, too, despite widely spread fear (and hope) in China and other places, did not consider expanding the war to mainland China, let alone planning another world war.⁵⁶ In short, the leaderships of the two “camps” did not have a plan for another world war. Nonetheless, with the outbreak of the Korean War, the discourse of World War III increasingly gained great verisimilitude worldwide simultaneously, as did the imagined reality of the Cold War. Why? It seemed so because these discourses proved flexible utility and adaptability for many different reasons in many places of the globe.

In South Korea, the outbreak of the Korean War itself did not necessarily appear as a sign of World War III at the beginning of the conflict. Not only that, it was not really a surprising bolt out of blue. The South Korean Army’s intelligence

in various formats. Most notably, see, for instance, CWIHP’s *Bulletins*, *Working Papers*, and digital archives online at < <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/digital-archive>>. Also, Shen Zhihua has translated numerous Russian documents into Chinese and published them in Taiwan; Shen Zhihua, *Chaoxian Zhanzheng: Eguo Danganguan de jiemi wenjian* [The Korean War: Declassified Documents from Russian Archives], 3 Vols (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo, 2003).

⁵⁴ Kim Dong-choon, 35.

⁵⁵ For instance, see, Kathryn Weathersby, “‘Should We Fear This?’ Stalin and the Danger of War with America.” *CWIHP Working Paper*, No. 39 (July 2002), 19; and Wojtech Mastny, *The Cold War and Soviet Insecurity: The Stalin Years* (New York: Oxford University Press), 1996. Some scholars have depicted more aggressive image of Stalin; see, for instance, Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshekov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge, 1996) and John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Now: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York, 1997).

⁵⁶ Truman was, in fact, quite reluctant even to accept the bombing of Dandong in August of 1950 for the fear of provoking war with China.

officers had been warning of a conventional military attack from North Korea since the end of 1949.⁵⁷ In addition, the Minister of Defense and Acting Prime Minister, Shin Sung-mo publicly warned on May 10, 1950 of the concentration of North Korean troops at the 38th Parallel with “apparent intention to attack” the South, and, a few days later, the Chief of General Staff issued a similar statement after visiting to the 38th Parallel.⁵⁸ Furthermore, while the war began with the North Korean invasion of the South, it could have occurred just the opposite way. President Yi Sung-man, in fact, had been advocating a concept of “*Bukbeol* [Northward Conquest]” for years, pleading with Washington for more military supplies, including long-range artillery, combat airplanes, and patrol ships, in hopes of taking over the northern area of the peninsula.⁵⁹ As a matter of fact, in late June of 1950, days before the North’s attack, Yi Sung-man appealed in person to a close friend of John Foster Dulles that South Korea would launch the offensive to take over North Korea within a year, and that it could be completed within a few days because the people of North Korea would rise up against the Kim Il-sung regime. President Yi even asserted that South Korea would do it with or without support from Washington, adding that an attempt to unify Korea would not be an act of “aggression.”⁶⁰

Put simply, North and South Korea had each been proclaiming for years the plans of “*Namjin* [Southward March]” and “*Bukbeol* [Northern Conquest],” respectively. The historical background for this situation was that Korea had been in

⁵⁷ Kim Dong-choon, 102-103.

⁵⁸ Memorandum, Seoul to Foreign Office, UK (May 23, 1950) in FO 371/84078: “Communism in Korea,” BNA, Kew, UK. According to this British memorandum, the “American experts” dismissed these warnings because “in their opinion the available information does not justify such statements.”

⁵⁹ Memorandum, William D. Mathews to John Foster Dulles, June 21, 1950, Box 49, Papers of John Foster Dulles, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

a civil war situation, alongside recent years' experiences and memories of internal guerilla warfare and insurgencies, including the Cheju (Jeju) Incident in the spring of 1948, the Yeosu-Suncheon Uprisings in the fall of 1948, and social unrest in every province in South Korea in the years that followed. In addition, numerous skirmishes along the 38th Parallel occurred before June 25, 1950, as well.⁶¹ Observing turbulence in the South, Kim Il-sung might have believed, as Yi Sung-man assumed the opposite situation, that the people in South Korea would rise up against the Yi's regime after the outbreak of the war.

Furthermore, the North Korean leadership might have considered their economic and industrial strength before the Korean War period. After all, partly due to the legacy of Japanese colonialism, the basic infrastructure in the Korean Peninsula was located north of the 38th Parallel. Over ninety percent of the country's hydro-electric power was generated in the North and none of this was available to the South. Ninety-five percent of the country's iron and steel production facilities, seven out of eight major cement facilities, and the greater part of its chemical industries (notably fertilizers), as well as its only petroleum processing plant, were all situated north of the 38th Parallel. In addition, seventy-five percent of Korea's coal and sixty-five percent of its timber lay north of the parallel, and, thus, were no longer accessible from the South.⁶² A British diplomat in Seoul concluded in his

⁶¹ For these local struggle derived from the postwar division of the peninsula, for instance, see works of Kim Dong-choon, Bruce Cumings, John Merrill, and Allan Millet among others. On the revolutionary movements in the North, see, for example, Charles K. Armstrong, *The North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003). For the Cheju Incident, in particular, see, the six-volume investigative reports by a local newspaper in Cheju, *Saishūtō Yonsan Jiken* [The Cheju Island 4.3 Incident] (Tōkyō: Shinkansha, 1994). Also, see Mun Gyonsu, *Saishūtō yon san jiken* [The Cheju Island 4.3 Incident] (Tōkyō: Heibonsha, 2008).

⁶² Memorandum, "Annual political report for Korea, 1949," Seoul to Foreign Office, UK (January 30,

report in January 1950 that “It seems that the balance of strength between the north and the south is now somewhat in favour of the north.”⁶³ In such a situation, it is not particularly surprising that North Korea seized the initiative before the development of South Korea.

Viewed from Korea, therefore, the outbreak of conventional warfare on June 25, 1950, was not really the “beginning” of the war, but a culmination of civil war struggles, or even a continuation of anti-colonial battles that had been continuing for decades since the Japanese colonial period. That is why many Koreans viewed the day as coming “at last,” instead of “out of blue.” Listening to the news, a poet Jo Ji-hun shouted, “The day that has to come once has *finally* arrived today!”⁶⁴ Likewise, Korean historian Kim Song-chil wrote in his diary on June 26, 1950, “Killing among the same bloodline, which has frightened us for five years, has come *at last*.”⁶⁵ These reactions were not particularly unusual, and, thus, a large majority of Seoul residents, including businessmen, industrialists, and intellectuals, did not flee from Seoul.⁶⁶ In the southern areas of South Korea, as well, some peasants simply continued their work in the fields, even though they knew that North Korean forces were moving southward; they reportedly thought that soldiers would not harm them because “they were the same blood, after all.”⁶⁷

The fact that a large majority of the population did not evacuate southward, of course, did not indicate their support for the Kim Il-sung regime or communist

1950) in F0371/84053, BNA, Kew, United Kingdom.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Park Myung-lim, 236, 239-240.

⁶⁵ Kim Song-chil, June 27, 1950, 17.

⁶⁶ Kim Dong-choon, 136. Kim Dong-choon has examined various cases of people who decided not to evacuate from Seoul.

⁶⁷ Kim Dong-choon, 110.

ideology. As a matter of fact, neither peasant revolts nor partisan uprisings occurred in South Korea, even when North Korea extended its domain near Pusan (Busan), at the southern tip of the peninsula.⁶⁸ Choices made by people to stay, to evacuate, or to join the North/South Korean forces were made, in many cases, not so much through ideological and political beliefs as coincidental and contingent factors, such as family and friendship ties, neighborhood relationships, or simply being forced by hunger.⁶⁹

Many residents changed their political agendas overnight without much effort. The historical background for this might be, at least partly, the legacy of Japanese colonialism, which ruled Korea for more than three decades. Because of this experience, as sociologist Kim Dong-choon argues, Koreans rarely had strong feelings of patriotism toward “state” or “ruler” until the Korean War period. In short, the attachments they had involved more about ethnic categories, like “Korean” in contrast to “Japanese” or “Chinese,” not so much about “state,” like North Korea or South Korea.

In addition to the lack of fervent modern nationalism among the mass of the people, the ruling circles might have lacked a sense of public-mind, instead managing the newly established country for their own personal ambitions and benefits.⁷⁰ It was no wonder that the Yi Sung-man regime had grown increasingly unpopular due to its oppression, corruption, and abuse of power. By the year of 1950, police control had been tightened over the daily lives of ordinary people, and

⁶⁸ Park Myung-lim, 174.

⁶⁹ See, for example, Park Myung-lim, 556-58.

⁷⁰ Memorandum, “Annual Report for Korea, 1949,” Seoul to Foreign Office, UK, January 30, 1950 in FO371/84053, BNA, Kew, UK.

numerous arrests were made under the National Security Law. Much worse, torture was regularly applied to those arrested on political and other charges, and “died under torture” became a routine entry in the police record.⁷¹ In early 1950, a British diplomat observed the situation in South Korea as such:

The abuses of authority are many and seldom neglected, and the corruption and oppression of the police has become an outstanding feature of the life of the country. [...]. The Government indeed finds itself in a perplexing predicament, for without employing harsh repressive measures, it cannot withstand communism, and yet these very measures...make new converts to the communist cause.⁷²

Under such a regime, it was no wonder that some wondered if it was good or bad to perpetuate the Yi Sung-man regime. Hearing news on coming of the South Korean army with the support of U.N. forces, Kim Tae-gil, a professor at Ewha Women’s University, was actually concerned because “it was not clear which side was our forces and which side was enemies.”⁷³ As these observations show, popular support for the regime was thin, and the project of “nation-building” campaigns had been unsuccessful before the summer of 1950.

This was exactly the crux of the Yi Sung-man regime’s problem in the pre-Korean War period. There was not a sense of “nation-state” with the fervent nationalism among the mass of the people that characterizes a modern state. It is no wonder that President Yi Sung-man, immediately following the outbreak of the conflict, viewed the situation as representing the “best opportunity for setting the Korean problem once and for all.”⁷⁴ The Korean War, in fact, provided opportunities to redefine a continuing civil war struggle as the forefront of World War III, which

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Memorandum, Seoul, Korea, to Foreign Office, UK, January 30, 1950, in FO371/84053: “Annual political report for Korea, 1949,” BNA, Kew, UK.

⁷³ Kim Dong-choon, 135-36.

⁷⁴ Park Myung-lim, 123.

would produce a sense of “nation” among the people, thus, creating support for the regime. Seen this way, adopting World War III logic and Cold War worldview seemed to have its own local “merits” in South Korea, even though the war itself rooted in their civil war.

Local adaptation of Cold War logic was nothing unique to South Korea. A similar use of “global” discourse in local nation building projects can be seen in other places, such as Taiwan, and newly born countries in South and Southeast Asia. As we have seen, the outbreak of the Korean War was seen by GMD leadership in Taipei as a golden opportunity for a counteroffensive on the mainland.⁷⁵ Underneath the gallant cries of “Counterattack the Mainland,” however, there was a more practical aim—building political and social order in Taiwan. On the one hand, the defeat of Chiang Kai-shek was, of course, a heavy blow for the Nationalist Party, but, on the other hand, as historian Wakabayashi Masahiro points out, the retreat to Taiwan provided GMD a chance to solidify their power base, because it freed them from the headaches of local politics, corrupt customs, and military cliques on the mainland, all of which had tormented Chiang Kai-shek and his sympathizers for years.⁷⁶ Thus, quite similar to nation building efforts of former-colonies in Asia, the Nationalist Party had to create and solidify its own power in Taiwan under GMD rule.

⁷⁵ For instance, the Central Executive Committee of the Nationalist Party on June 30, 1950, addressed that the Korean War would become a turning point, prompting to strengthen the U.S.-Taiwan relationship and to form an anti-communist united front in East Asia. See “Zhongyang zhixing weiyuanhui tonggao [Announcement of Central Executive Committee],” June 30, 1950, in 6-41-87: The Papers of the Central Reform Committee, Hoover Institute, Stanford University, Stanford, CA.

⁷⁶ Wakabayashi Masahiro, *Taiwan* (Tokyo: Chikuma shobo, 2001).

In fact, the common-place slogan of “Counterattack the Mainland” was usually accompanied by others, like “Build Taiwan.” When we look closely at the party’s slogans at that time, it is apparent that the emphasis was more on re-building and maintaining social order at home. Often slogans maintained, “Stop Luxury and Extravagance,” “Be Punctual,” “Keep Order,” and so on. A local newspaper in a small city, Jiayi, *Minsheng Ribao*, reflected such a tendency. On August 5, 1950, the paper appealed to readers regarding the need to “Mobilize anti-communism” and “Build Jiayi.” Going into specifics, we can see that the emphasis was on the latter; urgent tasks that the newspaper listed included, for instance, 1) planning of administrative districts for the city, 2) establishment of schools, and 3) rearrangement of the family registration system, and so on.⁷⁷ These socio-political tasks and campaigns were more closely related to creating social and political order at home. More tellingly, the years following the outbreak of the Korean War witnessed escalation of suppression of various minorities and dissidents, which later called the White Terror, which will be examined in a later chapter. In other words, the Korean War provided the Nationalist Party with an opportunity to build an “independent state” of Nationalist Taiwan, under the logic of the Cold War.

Likewise, in the Philippines, a similar pattern appeared. Within weeks of the outbreak of the Korean War, the Philippines government swiftly declared its support for the United States, and even seized the opportunity to suppress various kinds of “anti-government” factions in the islands. On July 15, 1950, the Mayor of Manila, Manuel de La Fuente, announced:

⁷⁷ “Dongyuan fangong, jianshe jiayi, difang zizhi bi chenggong [Mobilize anti-communism, built Jiayi; Local governing must succeed],” August 5, 1950, *Minsheng Ribao*, NTUL, Taipei, Taiwan.

In view of the grave developments in the world situation today, it is indeed imperative for the Philippines Government to take all precautions necessary, as well as stricter measures against the world's greatest threat. An extremely false and misleading ideology, communism, in the Philippines seeks to overthrow the democratic form of government that we all are enjoying now.⁷⁸

The mayor insisted on the outlawing of the Communist Party, and, in addition, demanded the establishment of the "Special Committee on Un-Filipino Activities," under which, in the years that followed, various groups, from nationalists to anti-Western and anti-Japanese activists, were suppressed in the name of the Cold War, a topic which we will revisit in a later chapter. In a slightly different fashion, Thailand also declared its support for the United States immediately following the North Korean invasion, with Premier Phibun Songkram asking Washington for additional military and economic aid.⁷⁹ These examples demonstrate that Cold War discourse at the outset of the Korean War was adapted and utilized in various ways, depending on local needs.

Local Needs: Anti-Colonialism

The discourse of World War III and the Cold War worldview at the outset of the Korean War period proved its flexibility and utility in a similar nation-building project in other newly born counties, through in quite different ways. In Indonesia, for instance, the tone toward the Korean War and American involvement was far lower. Rather than a hardening of anti-communist views, the Indonesian

⁷⁸ "Report on the Illegality of the Communist Party of the Philippines," published on May 15, 1951 by the Special Committee on Un-Filipino Activities, in "Internal Affairs in the Philippines; Outlawing the Communist Party," BNA, Kew, UK.

⁷⁹ "Premier Discusses War, A-Bomb, Nehru's Plan" in the *Bangkok Post*, July 21, 1950, "Siamese reactions to events in Korea; Offer of food rice and troops for UN forces," FO371/84362, BNA, Kew, UK.

government expressed an unwillingness to take any role in this matter, and the local presses continued to urge aloofness from the conflict and from the East-West confrontation.⁸⁰ A British official in Singapore analyzed this Indonesian neutralist attitude as arising from the need of a newly independent state to prove its own subjectivity to the world and to its own people.⁸¹ In other words, the Korean War provided an opportunity to demonstrate independence by choosing not to align with any foreign power. Being neutral in the Cold War world, thus, was useful to manifest its own independent judgment and to bolster legitimacy at home.

The local and historical background for this kind of adaptation was general skepticism toward the West and anti-colonial feelings in Indonesia. After all, independence was newly won, and many Indonesians were extremely sensitive to any attempt to restore direct or indirect rule by colonial powers in Asia. A reporter for the British *Observer* was keenly aware of this point: "People here think 'anti-imperialist' rather than 'anti-communist.'" According to this report on July 15, hearing news of the American intervention in Korea, many Indonesians were growing concerned that Western imperialism would return to Asia in "the guise of anti-communism."⁸² In fact, they feared, the United States had already been bolstering corrupt and reactionary regimes in Asia, including those of Yi Sung-man in Korea, Chiang Kai-shek in Taiwan, and Bao Dai in Vietnam.⁸³ Based on similar

⁸⁰ "Indonesian Government Statement on Korea," June 27, 1950, in FO371/83725: "Indonesian attitude to the war in Korea," BNA; Telegram, Jakarta to Foreign Office, UK, June 30, 1950, in FO371/83725: "Indonesian attitude to the war in Korea," BNA, Kew, UK.

⁸¹ Telegram, "Public Reactions to Korean Events," Gorge Thompson, Malaya, to Colonial Office, UK, in CO537/5965: "Reactions in Federation of Malaya and Singapore to events in Korea," BNA.

⁸² "Indonesian Wary About Korea," *Observer*, July 15, 1950, in "Various reactions to events in Korea," FO371/84529, BNA, Kew, UK.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

skepticism toward the Western powers, in India, as well, Prime Minister Nehru was criticized for “joining the Anglo-American bloc.”⁸⁴ In short, locals’ frameworks of understanding built on historical experiences and memories served as lenses through which foreign events were observed and understood.

Such was the case for Middle Eastern countries, as well. Reactions in Egypt and neighboring countries might have made the Indonesian government’s distant, neutralist policy look milder. On June 30, immediately following Washington’s announcement of its decision to dispatch U.S. forces to Korea, requesting for support from other countries, Egyptian Prime Minister Mustafa el-Nahhas called a press conference and announced his government’s decision not to support the U.N. Security Council resolution on the Korean issue. He critiqued the U.S. and U.N. in a roundabout way, saying:

In the past there have been causes of aggression against peoples, violations of sovereignty, and of the unity of the territory of States members of the U.N. These aggressions and violations were submitted to the U.N., which, contrary to what it is now doing in the case of Korea, took no action to stop them.⁸⁵

Cairo Radio was much more explicit and trenchant on the following day, harshly condemning American and British attitudes: “What is the difference between injustice in Korea and injustice in Egypt and Palestine? What is the difference between freedom in East Asia and freedom in West Asia? It is not a question of arms and military strength but of right and wrong.”⁸⁶ Apparently, the situation was

⁸⁴ Extract from Newspaper in India, “Communist Party Chiefs Expected to Discuss Policy on Korea War,” July 12, 1950, in “Developments in Political Parties in India; Communist Activities in India,” D0133/133, BNA, Kew, UK.

⁸⁵ Telegram (From Alexandria, Egypt, to Foreign Office, UK), July 1, 1950, in “Egyptian attitude towards Korea. Refusal to support UN Security Council resolution on Korea,” FO371/80396, BNA, Kew, UK.

⁸⁶ Excerpt from the Cairo Radio, July 1, 1950, in “Egyptian attitude towards Korea; Refusal to support

observed and understood through the lens of their recent bitter defeat in the Arab-Israel War (1948-49), which was called the “Catastrophe” in Egypt and the “War of Independence” in Israel. Cairo Radio acrimoniously queried:

[W]e ask the American gentlemen: Did you never think, when you supported Israel against the Arab states and inflicted injustice on Palestine and made hundreds of thousands of people homeless, that the aggression in Palestine was worse than that in South Korea? In Korea, the invaders of Korea were Korean people, while in Palestine the invaders were intruders—foreigners and immigrants from the United States and Europe.⁸⁷

Underneath such a feeling of injustice, there existed a deeper distrust toward former-colonial countries. The broadcast continued its question:

We ask our friends, the British: Did you really believe, after denying Egypt and the Sudan their rights and after their many sacrifices during two Great Wars in which they stood at your side, that Egypt would support you? Did you really think that the Egyptian people would burn their fingers a third time to pull your chestnut out of the fire?⁸⁸

To be sure, disagreements with this view existed within the society, and some newspapers, such as *Al Mokattam*, urged Egypt to join in support for the United States against communist aggression. However, many others advocated for outright neutrality in the Korean War, with a virulent anti-Western tone.⁸⁹

Such an attitude was shared in other Arab countries at the outset of the Korean War. In Baghdad, Iraq, for instance, almost all newspapers reportedly supported the Egyptian attitude of non-alignment, and in Damascus, Syria, too, most newspapers expressed skepticism, if not distrust, toward the “purity” of American aims in the Korean Conflict, charging that Americans sought only their own interests,

UN Security Council resolution on Korea,” FO371/80396, BNA, Kew, UK.

⁸⁷ Excerpt from the Cairo Radio, July 1, 1950, in “Egyptian attitude towards Korea. Refusal to support U.N. Security Council Resolution on Korea,” FO371/80396, BNA, Kew, UK.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Telegram (From Alexandria, Egypt, to Foreign Office, UK), July 4, 1950, “Egyptian attitude towards Korea; Refusal to support UN Security Council resolution on Korea,” FO371/80396, BNA, Kew, UK.

disregarding human rights.⁹⁰ As these examples show, existing local anti-colonial sentiments played unmistakable roles in observing and understanding the Korean War in many ex-colonies in Asia and Middle East. Because Korea was a colony of the Japanese empire, and because Korea was occupied by the Soviet Union and the United States, many observers in ex-colonies deemed the situation in Korea as overlapping with their own struggles at home.

Nowhere does this description fit more closely than in China, which had suffered from Western and Japanese colonial rule for more than a century. As we have seen, popular fear of World War III and distrust toward the Communist Party immediately following the American intervention were unmistakable. Simultaneously, however, American intervention in the Korean War revived a surge in genuine anti-colonial and anti-American sentiments among the mass of the people, even to a degree that went beyond the CCP's party line. Such a tendency can be seen in various ways. One involves the increase in trivial local disputes between Chinese and American residents, incidents of a kind that many Chinese most likely had to suffer in silence in the past. For instance, on July 15, an American male teacher at a middle school in Wuchang was exposed to ridicule for homosexual activity with his students.⁹¹ On August 5, an American in Jiangxi Province was accused of "letting" his dog bite a Chinese student on the thigh.⁹² In September, a

⁹⁰ Memorandum (From Baghdad, Iraq, to Foreign Office, UK), July 3, 1950, in "Arab States views on the situation in Korea," FO371/81920, BNA, Kew, UK; Telegram (From Damascus, Syria, to Foreign Office, UK), July 13, 1950, in "Syrian reaction to UN Security Council resolution on Korea," FO371/82793, BNA, Kew, UK.

⁹¹ "Guanyu SWuchang Wenhua Zhongxue meiji jiaoshi jijian xuesheng an [On the case of an American teacher's homosexual activities at the Wenhua High School in Wuchang]," July 15, 1950, No. 118-00346-08, FMA, Beijing, PRC.

⁹² "Guanhyu Jiangxi Nankangxian renmin fayuan guanyu Meiguo qiaomin zong quan yaoren an

female professor at Nanjing Jinling University was pilloried for her “distortion” of modern Chinese history.⁹³ What is most interesting about these incidents is not so much their accuracy or inaccuracy, but the fact that they were suddenly being exposed in this short period.

More than that, intriguingly, the communist authorities, in these cases, devoted themselves to smothering fires. In the first case, for example, the Foreign Ministry sought to end the dispute by expelling the accused teacher and directing local authorities not to prolong the matter any further.⁹⁴ In the second case, the Foreign Ministry urged a local court, which had given the man a three-month jail sentence, to mitigate this punishment.⁹⁵ In another case, concerning American Christian missionaries, Beijing issued a directive to local committees at the end of July, urging them not to interfere with missionaries’ daily activities, instructing them not to confuse China’s anti-imperialist stance with policies concerning religion.⁹⁶ These examples show that anti-American feelings emerged and grew in society spontaneously along with the development of the Korean War, and that the central authority did not necessarily take on an active role in shaping anti-American sentiment at that time.

panjue [On the case of People’s Court in Jiangxi Nankan prefecture regarding an American letting his dog bite a Chinese student on the thigh],” August 5, 1950, No. 118-00346-07, FMA, Beijing, PRC.

⁹³ *Changjiang Ribao*, September 7, 1950.

⁹⁴ “Guanyu SWuchang Wenhua Zhongxue meiji jiaoshi jijian xuesheng an [On the case of an American teacher’s homosexual activities at the Wenhua High School in Wuchang],” July 15, 1950, No. 118-00346-08, FMA, Beijing, PRC.

⁹⁵ “Guanhyu Jiangxi Nankangxian renmin fayuan guanyu Meiguo qiaomin zong quan yaoren an panjue [On the case of People’s Court in Jiangxi Nankan prefecture regarding an American letting his dog bite a Chinese student on the thigh],” August 5, 1950, No. 118-00346-07, FMA, PRC.

⁹⁶ “Guanyu fanmei yao qianshe zongjiao de zhishi [Directive that anti-America need not to involve in religion],” July 30, 1950, No. 118-00227-04, FMA, Beijing, PRC.

In fact, Beijing remained remarkably cautious in its stance toward the Korean War. Beijing was not a primary planner at the time of North Korea's attack on the South. As historians Shen Zhihua and Niu Jun point out, the outbreak of the Korean War itself did not draw the attention of the communist leadership at first.⁹⁷⁹⁸ Such a restrained attitude on the part of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was observable in its official and semi-official newspapers. The Communist Party's organ, *Renmin Ribao*, for instance, maintained a restrained attitude regarding news on the Korean War from its outbreak until the fall of 1950. Several political cartoons published in the paper between July 19 and 23 displayed the Communist Party's initial stance on the Korean War (Picture 3).⁹⁹ In all of these four cartoons, a common theme was *Koreans'* fighting against American imperialism; Chinese soldiers, or other Chinese people, never appeared in these cartoons.

Similarly, a poem in *Renmin Ribao* on July 23 read, "Salute the Brave Korean People's Army!" A headline concerning a student demonstration against American intervention read, "Beijing Students Unfold Various Campaigns, Cheer on the Korean People, Oppose the American Invasion."¹⁰⁰ These articles also implied that, although the Chinese people were opposed to U.S. intervention and thus respected North

⁹⁷ Niu Jun, *Reisenki Chugoku gaiko no seisaku kettei* [Policymaking of Chinese Diplomacy in the Cold War Period] (Tokyo, 2007); Niu Jun, "Yueguo San-ba xian—Political-military considerations and the fixation of the aim of the Resist-America-and-Assist-Korea War," *Zhonggong dangshi yanjiu* [CCP Historical Studies] (2002); Shen Zhihua, "Chaoxian Zhanzheng yanjiu zongshu: Xin cailiao he xin kanfa [Summary of Korean War Studies: New Materials and New Perspectives]," *Zhonggong dangshi yanjiu* [CCP Historical Studies] (1996); Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); and Chen Jian, "China's Changing Aims during the Korean War, 1950-1951," *The Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 1 (Spring 1992).

⁹⁸ Scholars focusing on the cold war aspect have tended to stress China's role in the beginning of the Korean War. For instance, see William Stueck, *The Korean War*; Vladislav Zubok and Konstantin Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War*; John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know* among others.

⁹⁹ *Renmin Ribao*, July 19 and 23, 1950.

¹⁰⁰ *Renmin Ribao*, July 23 and 25, 1950.

Korea's struggle, the Chinese people were still the third party in the Korean War. In fact, among thirty-five slogans for the yearly celebration of the establishment of the People's Liberation Army in early August, "Oppose the American Invasion!" and "Salute the Korean People's Army!" appeared only as the twentieth and twenty-first slogans, tagged on far behind domestic slogans such as "Prepare to Effectuate Land Reform!" and "Suppress Rebels and Reactionaries!"¹⁰¹ This attitude indicated Beijing's stance during the early summer of 1950, carefully avoiding an open, direct confrontation with the United States.

Semi-official newspapers, such as *Guangming Ribao*, published by the Democratic Parties Coalition kept in step with *Renmin Ribao*'s official line, although there were still some differences in degree of enthusiasm. For example, on August 6, 1950, *Guangming Ribao* carried a photo essay, titled, "Unite Whole People, Liberate Taiwan, Liberate Tibet." On that page, another small headline read, "Salute the Brave Korean People's Army!"¹⁰² A subtle implication of these headlines was that Korea was still carefully differentiated from the Chinese people's initiative. Although *Guangming Ribao* took a slightly more aggressive stance, and used harsh words regarding the Korean War and anti-American feelings, the paper seldom walked out of step. *Jiefang Ribao*, a party paper published in Shanghai, was even more reticent in terms of Chinese commitment to Korea. The headline of an article on the yearly celebration of the establishment of the PLA in early August read, "We are waiting for an order to march on Taiwan!" but did not mention Korea at all.¹⁰³ A political

¹⁰¹ *Renmin Ribao*, July 29, 1950.

¹⁰² *Guangming Ribao*, August 6, 1950.

¹⁰³ *Jiefang Ribao*, August 1, 1950.

cartoon on August 30 was more revealing; in the picture, lightning of “protest” pierce the “*Mei-di [American imperialism]*” of General MacArthur (Picture 4).¹⁰⁴ The point is that the lightning is labeled, simply, “voices of protest;” there is not even a sword or spear. In short, in early summer of 1950, official and semi-official newspapers carefully depicted China as a third party in the Korean War, suggesting a reticent stance on the part of Communist Party on that issue.

On the other hand, quite different attitudes can be found in various local newspapers, which tended to use more aggressive languages that went far beyond the party line.¹⁰⁵ These papers, particularly those issued by local publishers, tended to deliver more detailed everyday news at home with stronger anti-American sentiments. Although Chinese public opinion has been viewed as monolithic under the tight control of CCP propaganda and mobilization programs, in reality, heterogeneity can be observed. In terms of anti-American feelings, popular attitudes often exceeded the party line. One point of contrast, compared to the official stance, was the papers’ depiction of China as an important participant in the Korean War from the beginning of the conflict.

For example, CCP’s regional newspaper, *Changjiang Ribao* in Wuhan published a letter from three high school students right after Truman’s announcement, discussing American intervention and asserting that they would not surrender in the face of enemy attack.¹⁰⁶ Another reader’s letter on July 20

¹⁰⁴ *Jiefang Ribao*, August 30, 1950.

¹⁰⁵ For the detailed discussion of the characteristics of local newspapers in China, see, for example, Godwin Chu, Francis Hsu ed, *Moving Mountain: Cultural Change in China* (Honolulu: the University Press of Hawaii, 1979), 78; Alan Liu, *Mass Politics in the People’s Republic: State and Society in Contemporary China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996).

¹⁰⁶ *Changjiang Ribao*, July 4, 1950,

straightforwardly called on the Chinese to “attack our *common* enemy!”¹⁰⁷ Likewise, *Changchun Xinbao*, a local newspaper in Changchun, published a reader’s letter to Korean soldiers on July 28, praising North Korean’s war efforts: “When you are fighting, we will not neglect even a minute!”¹⁰⁸

More telling is a cartoon published in *Changjiang Ribao* in early August concerning American intervention in the Korean War (Picture 5); in the cartoon, a dog representing “American imperialism” is stabbed with a sword representing the “Korean people” from the left, and multiple swords representing “Chinese people,” “Vietnamese people,” and “Filipino people” from the right.¹⁰⁹ *Dongbei Ribao* similarly featured a cartoon portraying the situation even more clearly (Picture 6).¹¹⁰ The interesting point is that these cartoons in local newspapers depicted bayonets and swords against the United States, not just the “voices of protest” seen in the central organ.

These examples show quite complex popular attitudes in Chinese society, which was not monolithic at all. As we have seen, there was a rise in skepticism and doubt toward the Communist Party. At the same time, there was a surge in Anti-American sentiments on the ground. Such feelings developed through local interpretations of the meaning of the Korean War and American intervention, based on historical experiences and memories. As in Indonesia and Middle Eastern countries, the historical legacy of colonialism played roles in framing contemporary foreign events. In this process, the Beijing authority often took on the roles of

¹⁰⁷ *Changjiang Ribao*, 20 and 23 July 1950.

¹⁰⁸ *Changchun Xinbao*, July 28, 1950.

¹⁰⁹ *Changjiang Ribao*, 4 and 11 August 1950.

¹¹⁰ *Dongbei Ribao*, 31 July 1950.

soothing volatile popular anti-foreign, anti-colonial sentiments, which largely grew up on their own, not necessarily as products of CCP mobilization and propaganda. Such a metamorphosis of domestic attitudes later posed a dilemma for the Beijing leadership when the CCP faced the issue of entering the Korean War in the fall of 1950, which we will examine in a later chapter. Needless to say, such an entangled interplay between state policymaking, social attitudes, and historical contexts can be seen in another primary participant, the United States, at the beginning of the Korean War.

Local Needs: Probing “Americaness”

From the beginning, the Truman administration’s choice to intervene in the Korean War was more about political decisions than military needs. Had it not had the discourse of World War III and its impact on domestic politics, the administration might not have felt the need to dispatch U.S. troops to Korea; after all, it could be seen as a local, civil war, which would not pose a challenge to the security of the United States. In fact, quite a few governmental and military officials did not see American involvement as necessary. Paul Nitze, Director of the Policy Planning Staff, thought it unlikely that the United States would respond to the attack militarily, because the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) had decided a few years earlier that South Korea was not within the perimeter of the area that was essential for the defense of the United States.¹¹¹ Flying back to Washington D.C. from New Brunswick, Canada,

¹¹¹ Paul Nitze, Transcript of the BBC interview, Paul H. Nitze Papers (Hereafter PHNP), Box 130, Folder 3 “Korean War,” Library of Congress (Hereafter LC). In the summer of 1949, General Douglas MacArthur explained the defense line from the Aleutian Islands to Japan and Okinawa, and to Taiwan,

where he was enjoying salmon fishing at the time of the attack, he was surprised by the top administration's decision to enter the war. Likewise, General Bonner Fellers and Secretary of the Army Frank Pace, respectively, stated that the JCS and Defense Department had no idea that the United States would take military action until their conference with the President.¹¹² For these officials, the crisis was simply a military event on the distant Korean Peninsula, one detached from American security interests and one to which Americans would not need to react. Secretary of the Army Pace further clarified that the dispatch of U.S. troops was not based on the Department of Defense's desire to do so, but its support for the "political policies" of the government.¹¹³

What made Truman choose to dispatch U.S. troops to Korea were "common sensical" views in American society that he shared with a large majority of the public at that time. One is the prevailing discourse of World War III and the "reality" of the Cold War built on the former. The other is common indifference toward Korea. No sooner had President Truman announced his support for South Korea than a resident of Dallas, Texas, was on the phone, asking his local newspaper, "Where is Korea, anyway? Are the people Indians or Japanese? And what time is it there?"¹¹⁴

Like this man, even while their country occupied the southern half of the Korean

Philippines, and Singapore. By the same token, Dean Acheson delineated the same policy at the National Press Club speech on January 12, 1950.

¹¹² Letter, Bonner Fellers to Robert A. Taft, 19 July 1950, Robert A. Taft Papers (Hereafter RATP), "1950, Korea," Box 670, LC; "Memo of Conversation," 1 July 1950, JFDP, "Acheson, Dean 1950," Box 47, Seeley Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University (Hereafter SML), Princeton, NJ. Even General Douglas MacArthur told a British journalist about a year before that the U.S. defense line ran through a chain of islands from the Philippines, Okinawa, and Japan, to the Aleutian Islands and Alaska. See William J. Seabald, diary, 155.

¹¹³ Memorandum of Conversation among Dean Acheson, John Foster Dulles, and Frank Pace, July 1, 1950, Dean Acheson File, John Foster Dulles Papers, Mudd Library, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey. (P2)

¹¹⁴ "War in Asia: the People," *Time*, July 10, 1950, 9.

Peninsula, many Americans did not pay much attention to Korea, and it had never been a subject of widespread intense popular interest in the United States before June 25, 1950.¹¹⁵ When it was sporadically reported on, such as during the Cheju Incident of April 1948 and Yeosu-Suncheon Uprisings in October 1948, American newspapers and magazines tended to describe these events simply as “Soviet aggression on the march in Asia,” ignoring more complicated local struggles and history.¹¹⁶ Based on this viewpoint and information, many Americans quickly came to conclude that the North Korean invasion was conducted on the order of Moscow, and that Washington was correct in dispatching its military forces to Korea. Truman’s reading of domestic attitudes was accurate. As we have seen, initial support for the administration’s decision was overwhelming. A Gallup Poll revealed that 81 percent of those surveyed approved of the decision to send forces to Korea, with some 13 percent disapproving.¹¹⁷ Major newspapers and magazines across the nation followed this current, as well.¹¹⁸

This does not indicate, of course, the existence of a “consensus” in American society at the outset of the Korean War. As a matter of fact, in the early stages of the conflict, quite a few people publicly disagreed with the mainstream viewpoint. A New York woman asked Truman, for instance, “What are we doing there? This is

¹¹⁵ See, for instance, “Korea,” November 25, 1946, in (National Archives 51-2); and November 3, 1948, (NA 81).

¹¹⁶ “The insurrection in Southern Korea,” October 25, 1948, *Minnesota Tribune*.

¹¹⁷ “Monthly Survey of American Opinion on International Affairs,” No. 110 (June 1950), The Office of Public Opinion Studies ed., Department of State, Schuyler Foster Papers (Hereafter SFP), Box 12, National Archives (Hereafter NA), College Park, MD; Another poll also showed that the great majority of those polled insisted that Russian expansion in Asia and Europe must be stopped. See, “Russia,” *The Gallup Poll*, Vol. 2, August 4, 1950, 929. In the poll, 68 percent answered that Russian expansion in Asia and Europe must be stopped, while 25 percent replied that the United States should keep out of a major war. Also, 79 percent believed that “the United States should go to war with Russia if communist troops attack the American zone in Germany.”

¹¹⁸ “Daily Opinion Summary” between June 26, 1950 and September 27, 1950, SFP, Box 5, NA.

clearly a civil war, and the U.N. Charter clearly states that there shall be no intervention in domestic situations.”¹¹⁹ A New Jersey veteran likewise warned Washington not to repeat the same mistake that it made in China: “As in China, we support an admittedly corrupt and undemocratic regime more or less against the will of the people.”¹²⁰ As a New York man argued, these opinions were based on the observation that “revolts against tyranny and poor economic conditions [were] flaring throughout Asia,” and that “it would be over-simplification to ascribe this unrest solely to communism.”¹²¹ By the same token, the American Labor Party of New York City appealed in mid-July, demanding the immediate withdrawal of American troops and arms from Korea. It argued, “American people are proud of always being on the side of people fighting for freedom. Yet, today, American boys are fighting against Korean people who want freedom and independence.”¹²²

Such a critique of the mainstream view was not necessarily rare in the beginning of the war.¹²³ In fact, a White House staff, George Elsey, observed in mid-July that Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, and his colleagues “seemed panicked by the criticism,” which prompted the presidential speech to Congress in mid-July, which re-emphasized the need to dispatch U.S. forces to Korea. Fortunately for the president and members of the administration, these dissenting voices remained

¹¹⁹ Letter, Ann Ash to HST, July 12, 1950, HSTP, Official File: 471-B, Korean Emergency, HSTL.

¹²⁰ Letter, Russell Ames to HST, July 4, 1950, HSTP, Official File: 471-B, Korean Emergency, HSTL.

¹²¹ Letter, Bernard N. Craven to HST, June 30, 1950, HSTP, Box 1307, Official File 471-B, Korean Emergency, HSTL.

¹²² Letter, American Labor Party, NYC, to HST, Box 1327, Official File 471-B, Korean Emergency, HSTP, HSTL.

¹²³ Drew Pearson, “President Needs All Help in Crisis,” 24 July 1950, *Washington Post*. See Student Research File “Korean War,” Box 1.

relatively in a minority position in the summer and fall of 1950. Rather, in the early stage of the conflict, Truman's decision met overwhelming support.

Behind such a profound public support was genuine fear of World War III, which can be observed in various ways in everyday people's daily lives. Several popular magazines, for instance, had already featured simulations of the estimated damage of a nuclear attack on American cities, such as New York City. Some of the most notable examples were popular magazine *Look*'s article "How Prepared Are We If the Russians Should Attack?" published on June 20, 1950, as well as *Collier's* fictional article "Hiroshima, U.S.A." on August 5, 1950 (Picture 7), both of which caused considerable reactions among both governmental officials and the general public.¹²⁴ According to a Gallup Poll in August of 1950, in fact, nearly two thirds of those polled actually believed that the United States was already in World War III,¹²⁵ and that the Russians would use the atomic bomb on American cities.¹²⁶

Memories of World War II were still fresh, and many housewives, who worried about the possible outbreak of a full-scale war and subsequent scarcity of

¹²⁴ "How Prepared Are We If Russian Should Attack?" *Look* (20 June 1950); John Lear, "Hiroshima, U.S.A.: Can Anything Be Done About It?" *Collier's* (5 August 1950), 11-15, 68-69; "Week's Mail," *Collier's*, 23 September 1950.

¹²⁵ *The Gallup Poll*, "World War III" (19 August 1950), Vol. 2, 929. The poll was conducted between July 30 and August 4. Also, another survey, held by the National Opinion Research Center revealed that fear of another world war had reached the highest point since 1945; In June before the outbreak of the war, merely 17 percent of those polled expected a general war within two years and 61 percent within ten years; in July after the invasion, however, 54 percent feared it would happen within two years and 80 percent within ten years. See Office of Public Opinion Studies (Graph 2), Department of State, "Monthly Survey of American Opinion on International Affairs," No. 112 (August 1950), Schuyler Foster Papers, Box 12, NA.

¹²⁶ "Atom Bombs," *The Gallup Poll*. Vol. 2 (2 August 1950). 929. The original question was "Do you think Russia would use the atom bomb on American cities, or not." This question was given only to those who believed that Russian had any atomic bombs (73%). Among those 73%: "Yes, she would," 66 %, "No, she would not," 4 %, and "No opinion," 3 %; "Atom Bombs," *The Gallup Poll*. Vol. 2 (2 August 1950). 929. The original question was "Do you think Russia has any atom bombs?" The answers were: "Yes," 73%, "No," 11 %, and "Don't know," 16 %.

goods, began hoarding commodities (Picture 8).¹²⁷ Taking some extreme cases as examples, a New York housewife placing two large orders for sugar reportedly said, "I'm just trying to get some before hoarders buy it all."¹²⁸ Another housewife in Bethesda, Maryland, with four new refrigerators in her kitchen reportedly complained when a dealer would not sell her two more.¹²⁹ These stories were extreme examples of hoarding based on the illusion of shortages. In spite of the rapidly rising prices of commodities following the outbreak of the Korean War, nation-wide scarcity actually did not occur.¹³⁰ But hysteria did. For instance, Joseph Bildner, president of Kings Super Markets in New Jersey, put 2,400 five-pound bags on display in his Plainfield store to prove that there was plenty of sugar. In four hours, surprisingly, all six tons had been sold.¹³¹ This phenomenon of hoarding in the summer of 1950 exemplified how widely anxiety and fear of war had spread throughout the country.

More interesting than the act of hoarding were people's reactions against hoarders. A reporter for the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, posing as a hoarder, walked into a local supermarket and ordered 25 cartons of cigarettes. The resulting article described how the "angry salesgirl glowered" at him and then "slowly began to stack up the cartons, counting each one in a voice that could be heard in every corner of the store."¹³² The article also illustrated how other customers raised their eyebrows at the reporter's excessive shopping. As some political cartoons depicted,

¹²⁷ Cartoon. "This Little Pig Went to Market." *Newsweek* (7 August 1950). 64.

¹²⁸ "Hoarders at Work." *Newsweek* (7 August 1950). 64.

¹²⁹ "The March of the News." *The U. S. News and World Report* (25 August 1950). 2.

¹³⁰ "Impact of War: A Rush to Buy—But Most Things Are Plentiful." *The U. S. News and World Report* (14 July 1950). 11.

¹³¹ "Sugar for All." *Newsweek* (21 August 1950). 70.

¹³² "Nobody Loves A Hoarder." *Life* (21 August 1950). 26-27.

people's criticism of hoarders and their support for America's intervention in Korea were interlinked (Picture 9).¹³³ Hoarders were increasingly seen as selfish and unpatriotic. Ordinary people's reactions to hoarders implied that these people knew how to behave and act when the nation was committed in battles overseas. In a sense, people mobilized themselves in their will to preserve the social interest of the nation.

In the midst of strong, even fanatical, support for the war, an interesting phenomenon occurred. One might expect that the public would oppose the increasing of taxes, the controlling of prices, and cooperation with a strict mobilization plan. Nonetheless, many American people in the summer of 1950 took to their pens to inform governmental officials and newspaper editors that they would gladly accept such obligations, and they went even further by urging an increase in taxes and a systematic mobilization of society for war. "If [price] ceilings are for our country's best interest, we are for ceilings," wrote one Minnesota businessman to Congress. A laundry owner in Colorado also entreated, "Permit me to urge the Government confiscation of all profits from industry." A woman in Illinois wrote a letter to the President on July 17: "Let's have complete mobilization now—to win in Korea as soon as possible, and to deter the Russians from attacking anywhere else in the world. We are very proud of your quick reaction to the North Korean aggression."¹³⁴ A man in Michigan adamantly supported U.S. military

¹³³ *Saturday Evening Post* (19 August 1950). 10. *Newsweek* (14 August 1950). 28.

¹³⁴ Mary Whitman, Illinois, 17 July 1950, Papers of Harry S. Truman: Official File, OF 471-B, Comments re. of President's statement on June 27 re. Korean War. Harry S. Truman Library (HSTL).

intervention in Korea but was growing irritated with the slow pace of U.S. action. In a letter to the President on August 16, he asserted:

From the conversation I have with men on the street, it would appear that the American citizen is farther ahead in his thinking than you in Washington. We are ready and anxious for controls, rationing, priorities and all the other measures to help our poor boys in Korea. Let us put aside business-as-usual and show Russia that Communism is not the answer—that the American people willingly will work and sacrifice to retain their freedom.¹³⁵

These letters indicate some of the more vocal voices in the summer of 1950. George Gallup similarly wrote that 70 percent of those asked would support higher taxes to build a larger army and navy.¹³⁶ To the question of how to pay defense costs, 60 percent suggested raising taxes and 19 percent proposed borrowing. Republican Representative from New York Jacob Javits was probably right to comment, “I think the American people are way ahead of their leaders in the things they are willing to do to defeat this communist menace as we see it in Korea.”¹³⁷ In the early phase of the Korean War, local and national statesmen were often urged by the public to confront the communist “threat” more decisively. Such popular political cultures in 1950 were based on local sentiments of distrust and fear toward the unknown others—communists. As we have seen such an “anti-communist” sentiments had local roots, but the outbreak and progress of the Korean War further inflamed those feelings, symbolically and emotionally associating the foreign event with alleged expansion of communist influence at home.

¹³⁵ A. L. Doenges to Harry Truman, 16 August 1950, PHST: Official File, 471-B, Miscellaneous. Harry S. Truman Library (HSTL).

¹³⁶ John Fousek, *To Lead the Free World: American Nationalism and the Cultural Roots of the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 168; “Defense Cost,” *The Gallup Poll* Vol. 2 (23 August 1950), 934.

¹³⁷ *Congressional Record* 82nd, 1st Session, 1950, 96, 11519-20 quoted in Pierpaoli, *Truman and Korea*, 35.

In other words, Americans were fighting not only real battles in Korea but also an imaginary war that was generated, to a large extent, in their own imaginations, which can be termed “Cold War fantasy.” Such imagination of “real” situations was maintained through daily, repeated practices being taken up not only by politicians and governmental and military officials, but also by many ordinary people, old and young. Perhaps, a high-school girl in Connecticut never imagined that she was making the Cold War world; yet, she *did* so as one participant in the imagined reality when she adopted a particular worldview, convinced herself in that manner, and wrote a letter to the White House on August 14. She pleaded:

I am only a high school student and you most likely won't even read my letter but if you would try to understand how a 15 year girl wants the chance to live [*sic*]. If we, the United States could only make a sneak attack on Russia before they get the chance to make one on us. On night when I was laying in my bed and could [not?] sleep, I heard a plane over head and a streak of fear went through me, afraid any minute we all would be killed. [...]. Why don't we take a chance and sneak up on them even if we lose the war (which I doubt it if we do something about it) at least we can say we tried. We are a wonderful nation, let's keep it that way.¹³⁸

This letter, of course, was not particularly original. She may have simply echoed what many others told her. What matters, however, was not whether it was “original” or not, but the fact that she joined in and repeated, contributing to the reproduction of the imagined reality, which, in turn, created and solidified the Cold War world itself.

With the escalation of Cold War fantasy in the summer of 1950, a politician who had been criticized and was fading away suddenly came back to center stage: Joseph McCarthy. It was, indeed, the Korean War that made McCarthy a national

¹³⁸ Letter, Lorraine Henderson to Harry S. Truman, August 14, 1950, Box 1310, PHST, Official File 471 B, HSTL, Independence, Missouri.

star.¹³⁹ “Today American boys lie dead in the mud of Korean valleys,” McCarthy announced, stepping up his offensive on July 12, “Some have their hands tied behind their back, their faces shot away by Communist machine guns.” After critiquing the Truman administration’s management of the Korean situation, McCarthy went on to question alleged communists in the State Department. He said:

Today Korea is the crisis area. Where will it be tomorrow if the same men act as your advisors and mold your thinking, Mr. President? [...]. There are those who say we should not spend time searching for those responsible for the disasters of the past few years. Common horse-sense dictates, however, that in order to protect America in the critical weeks, months and years ahead we must determine who in positions of trust seek to betray us, and then act to get them out of government. If allowed to remain, they will undoubtedly tip the scales for disaster and against victory for this nation.¹⁴⁰

Riding a tide of war scare and anti-communist feelings immediately following the outbreak of the Korean War, McCarthy launched a counterattack. Against Millard Tydings, Democratic Senator from Maryland, who had been criticizing McCarthy’s charge as groundless, McCarthy struck back, saying, “[Tydings] sought to assure communists in the government that they are safe in their positions.”¹⁴¹ Now, it was Tydings who was driven into a difficult situation. According to a *Gallup Poll* taken right after the outbreak of the Korean War, 41 percent of those polled believed in McCarthy’s charges, while only 20 percent did not.¹⁴² A full-page editorial in the

¹³⁹ Philip Jenkins, *Cold War At Home: The Red Scare in Pennsylvania, 1945-1960* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 9. The amount of literature on the red scare in the postwar America is enormous. For brief description of historiography, see the first chapter.

¹⁴⁰ Letter, Joseph McCarthy to Harry S. Truman, July 12, 1950, Box 872, Official File 252K, PHST, HSTL, Independence, Missouri.

¹⁴¹ July 21, 1950, in Carton 1, John S. Service Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, CA. (B25)

¹⁴² “Communists in Government,” *The Gallup Poll*: Vol. 2 (7 July 1950), 924.

Washington Time-Herald spit out in early July: “Unfortunately, nobody believes them. [The Tydings report] is a large bucket of whitewash.”¹⁴³

In view of the Korean War, and seen from the dominant perspective in American society at that time, McCarthy’s charges seemed more plausible. It is important to note, however, that it was not the Korean War that created the red scare of this period. Nor did McCarthy create that phenomenon. Actually it was so-called “anti-communist” logic with domestic roots in the United States that conditioned many Americans to view the Korean War as part of Moscow’s communist aggression, which, in turn, increased the verisimilitude of McCarthy’s charges more than ever before.

Translation at Home

Briefly examining immediate responses to the outbreak of the Korean War in many places of the world in the summer of 1950, it is surprising to see how thousands of people worldwide could witness the same event simultaneously and how they could interpret it so differently. On the one hand, as we have seen, the outbreak of the conflict and American intervention added verisimilitude to the discourse of World War III worldwide. With memories of World War II still fresh, the war in Korea did not seem to be simply a local battle between North and South Korea. There must be, many assumed, superpowers behind them. Against the backdrop of such World War III discourse, the moment was now conceptualized and periodized as a moratorium, a transitional period before the advent of a real World

¹⁴³ “Daily Opinion Summary” (19 July 1950), GMEP, Subject File “Internal Security: Sen. McCarthy’s Charges,” Box 70, HSTL, Independence, MO.

War III—the era of the Cold War. It was such a particular way of recognition of the present and the numerous repetitions of such practices that made what was merely a discourse of the Cold War into the “actuality” of the period.

If a nation-state was an “imagined community” a modern product of shared imaginations and practices among certain group of people in certain geographical location as Benedict Anderson has pointed out, a strikingly similar nature appeared with the consolidation of the Cold War. In practice, the “reality” of the Cold War existed not because it existed but because people thought it exist. It was a product of shared imaginations and repeated practices—an imagined reality. The crucial difference was that the “reality” of the Cold War, which gained plausibility against the backdrop of World War III discourse, was imagined and shared not only among particular groups of people in particular geographical spheres as the case of a nation-state; it was envisioned and joined nearly worldwide across ethnicities, religions, languages, and geography. Such shared recognition of the world shaped the certain sense of periodization concerning the present, which, in turn, constrained and shaped the actuality of the world. In effect, reality was imagined, then, imagination became reality.

On the other hand, however, looking at each case more closely, we can see the ways in which the discourse of World War III, seemingly shared worldwide similarly and simultaneously, was actually more locally adopted through indigenous lenses, which were utilized to express diverse social needs in each society. In an extremely simplified view, in some places, such as South Korea and Taiwan, the discourse of World War III proved its utility for locals’ nation building projects. In

other places, such as Indonesia, Egypt, and China, it functioned as a backdrop against which locals could express independence and subjectivity in their century-long anti-colonial struggles. In other cases, like that of the United States, the Cold War logic was useful for expressing locals' patriotism, re-confirming their "national identity."

Such differences in the use of foreign events resulted from the nature of "translation," in a metaphorical sense. Any work of translation between two languages, for instance, always has to creatively interpret the meanings of foreign words in terms of one's native language and express them through the native language, leading to inevitable creation, or imaginative understanding. Likewise, observing foreign events is always accompanied by the risk that they will be viewed in terms of spectators' local experiences, contexts, and political languages, even though events and phenomena observed might have different contexts and historical backgrounds. This happens because any context is always a matter of the "here" based on local experiences and memories; it is something that the majority of the population in a certain area takes for granted, that no one really has doubts about. However, physical distance makes sharing such contexts difficult, if not impossible, and gives locals enormous power to translate and localize foreign events in terms of their own domestic experiences and memories, resulting in the formation of multiple different versions of "reality" of the world.

Such locally interpreted "reality" of the world could not be ignored because it was such modified versions of "reality" that shaped and conditioned the ways in which peoples and policymakers saw their societies and chose particular policies in

this period. This chapter has examined how local people “understood” the Korean War in the summer of 1950, and how their understandings developed in dialogue between foreign events and local needs. In the next two chapters, we will investigate how such local versions of “reality” actually functioned in the processes of policymaking of two major foreign actors of the conflict—Washington and Beijing, respectively—following the U.S. victory at the Inchon Landing on September 15, 1950.

Chapter 2: Pictures

Picture 1:

People preparing for leaving Seoul
Seoul, South Korea
June 1950
MacArthur Memorial Archives, Norfolk, VA.



Picture 2-1:
"Push-Button Warfare"
US News & World Report
July 21, 1950



Picture 2-2:

"Where Next?"
Ithaca Journal
July 8, 1950



Picture 3-1:
 “Get Out!”
Renmin Ribao
 July 19, 1950

(The characters on the strong man read “the Korean People”)



Picture 3-2:
 “A Pincer Attack”
Renmin Ribao
 July 19, 1950

(The characters on the hands read “Korean People’s Army” on the left and “Korean Guerrilla on the right. Figures running away were Yi Sung-man and MacArthur”)



Picture 3-3:

“American Bandits’ ‘Miscalculation’”
Renmin Ribao, July 19, 1950



Picture 3-4:

Renmin Ribao, July 23, 1950

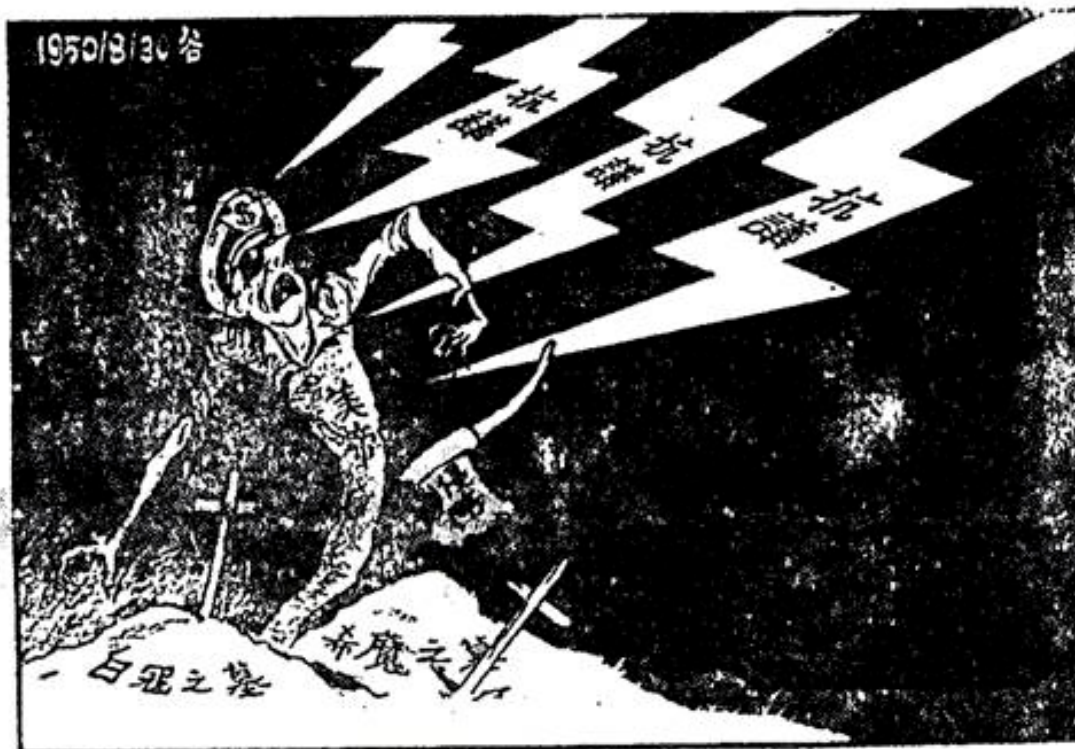


Picture 4:

“Struck Dead by Lightning”

Jiefang Ribao
August 30, 1950

The letters on the lightning read “protest.”



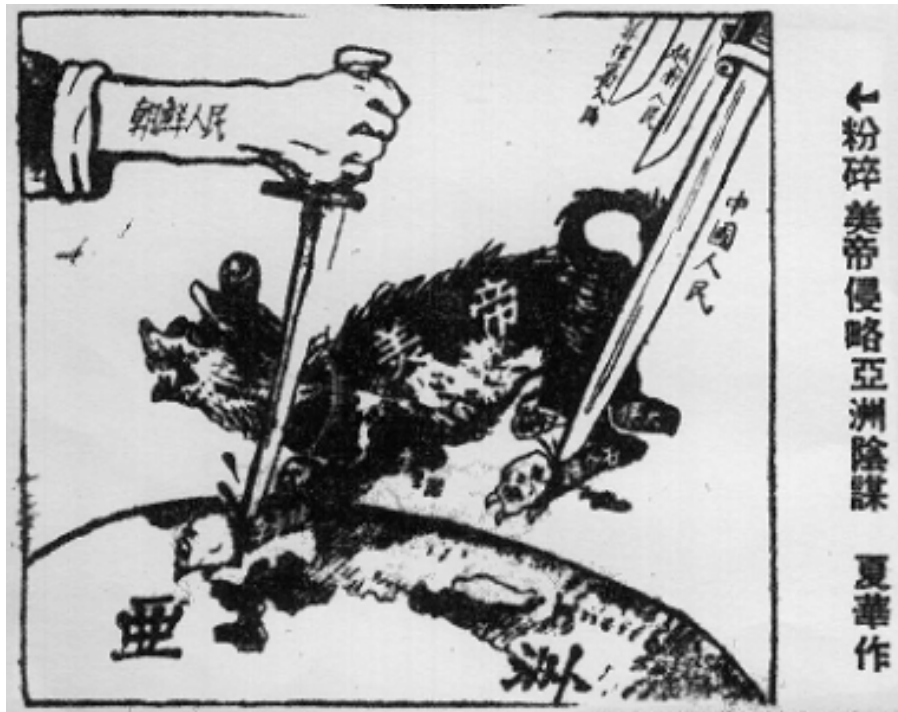
Picture 5:

"Crush American Imperialist's Scheme of Invading Asia"

Changjiang Ribao

August 4, 1950

(The dog representing "American Imperialist" is stabbed with knives of "Korean people" from the left and "Chinese people," "Vietnamese people," and "Philippine people" from right side).



Picture 6:

“Chopping Off Evil Nails”

Dongbei Ribao

July 31 1950

The hands of a man representing America were stubbed by bayonets of “Korean People’s Army” and “People’s Liberation Army.” The man’s hands are on Korea and Taiwan, respectively.



Picture 7-1:

"Hiroshima U.S.A."

Collier's

August 5, 1950

Cover page



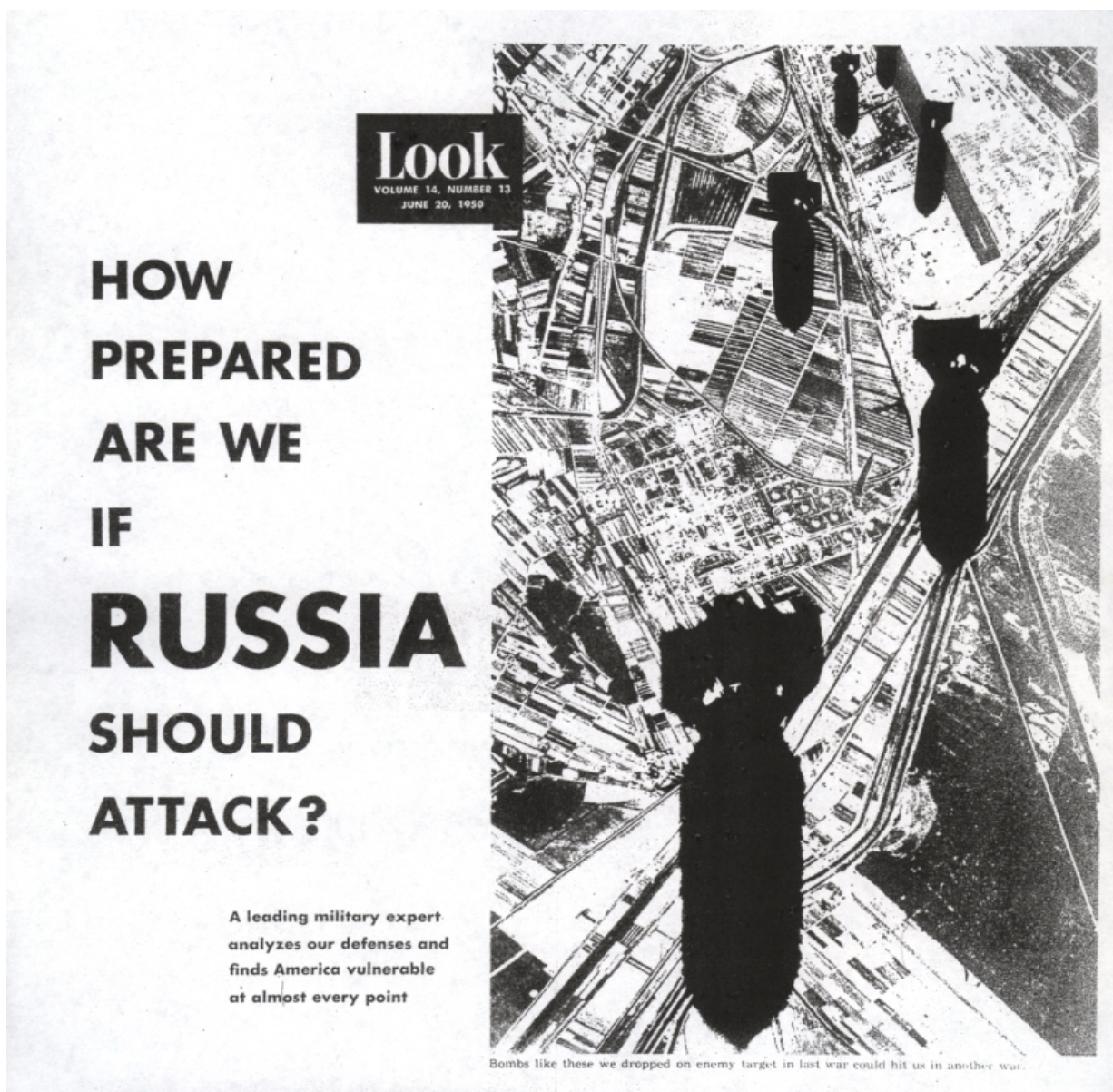
Picture 7-2:

"How Prepared Are We If Russia Should Attack?"

Look

June 20, 1950

Cover page



Picture 8:

"This Little Pig Went to Market"

Newsweek

August 7, 1950

P. 64



Picture 9:

"Shakedown for Decency"

Saturday Evening Post

August 19, 1950

p. 10



Part II: Epoch of the Social

Chapter 3: Cold War Fantasy

[To] gain a full understanding of what was involved in all the phrases that run glibly and easily through the diplomatic documentation of that day, [a reader would] have to read other things as well—things more closely related to the lives of the peoples themselves, things dealing not just with the relations between sovereign authorities but also with the myriad points of contact between those authorities and the peoples subject to their rule.¹

George F. Kennan, 1961

The sweeping victory at the Inchon Landing on September 15, 1950 demanded that the Truman administration make a final decision about what to do next—stopping at the 38th Parallel or continuing to march on northward? In retrospect, since the conflict itself began with North Korean forces' invasion of South Korea, it could have ended with the restoration of the pre-war situation. In fact, the official stance of the US government in June and July of 1950 was that the United States “had no intention to do more than to restore the *status quo ante* and no intention to proceed to the conquest of northern Korea.”² The Truman administration could have stopped US troops at the 38th parallel and declared victory in early October, possibly avoiding China's full entry into the war, and averting a prolonged war. There was actually heated discussion inside and outside the government, and, in fact, the administration did not necessarily see the policy of crossing the 38th parallel as an appealing one. Yet, by the end of September,

¹ George F. Kennan, Book Review, “An Historian of Potsdam and His Readers,” *American Slavic and East European Review*, Vol. 20, No.2 (April 1961), 289-94.

² George F. Kennan, *Princeton Seminars*, 13 February 1954, Reel 2, Track 2, 4. Harry S. Truman Library (Hereafter HSTL); *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*, 1950: Vol.7 (10 July 1950), 46.

members of the Truman administration felt that, as expert diplomat and advisor to the president, Averell Harriman recalled, there would be “no way to stop it.”³

In spite of this chance to terminate the war at an early phase of the conflict, the cease-fire for the Korean War was not finalized until July 1953, at the same 38th parallel, after huge numbers of casualties for American, Chinese, Korean, and other nations’ forces, as well as millions of civilian casualties on the peninsula. Why was Washington not satisfied with the recovery of the pre-war situation? How was the initial strategy of stopping at the 38th parallel challenged and modified in the summer and fall of 1950? Why did Washington stick to the notion of crossing the 38th parallel, a line that the Truman administration saw as unimportant in a military and economic sense? Several scholars have emphasized military and tactical grounds, as well as high-ranking officials’ leadership and calculations.⁴ Also, policymakers’ personality traits, such as hubris, have been discussed.⁵ By contrast, apart from a few exceptions, the role of domestic politics and the 1950 midterm elections in shaping American foreign policy has not been focused on sufficiently.⁶

³ Averell Harriman, *Princeton Seminars*, 14 February 1954, Reel 6, Track 1, 7, HSTL.

⁴ William Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); Barton Bernstein, “The Policy of Risk: Crossing the 38th Parallel and Marching to the Yalu,” *Foreign Service Journal* (March 1977), 16-22, and 29; Walter LaFeber, “Crossing the 38th: The Cold War in Microcosm” in *Reflections on the Cold War: A Quarter Century of American Foreign Policy*, ed. Lynn H. Miller and Ronald Pruessen (Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1974), 71-90; William Stueck, “The March to the Yalu: The Perspective from Washington,” in *Child of Conflict: the Korean-American Relationship, 1943-1953*, ed. Bruce Cumings (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1983), 195-237; James I. Matray, “Truman’s Plan for Victory: National Self-Determination and the Thirty-Eighth Parallel Decision in Korea,” *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 66, No.2 (September 1979), 314-33.

⁵ Arnold Offner, *Another Such Victory: President Truman and the Cold War, 1945-1953* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002); Ernest May, *“Lesson” of the Past: The Use and Misuse of History in American Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975 [1973]); Melvyn Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).

⁶ Rosemary Foot, *The Wrong War: American Policy and the Dimensions of the Korean Conflict, 1950-1953* (Cornell University Press: Ithaca, 1985); Burton Kaufman, *The Korean War: Challenges in Crisis*,

Furthermore, contemporary society and political culture, as well as the carriers of these—the people—have been largely ignored.

Although traditional accounts have stressed the roles of realpolitik and elite-policymakers and influential opinion-makers, the course of US foreign strategy in the year of 1950 cannot be fully understood without examining contemporary “realities”—socially and historically constructed webs of meanings shared by the large majority of the people. Thus, to understand Washington’s actions, we need to explore domestic matrices and popular political cultures that molded their Cold War fantasy, or as it was called, “reality.” This chapter argues that the Truman administration’s hard-line policy in Korea should be understood in the context of the climate of fear and crisis in 1950. The administration’s policy was driven by policymakers’ concerns about domestic politics, social unrest, and mentalities of everyday people. Throughout this period, the administration had to avoid being seen as “soft on communism” at all costs. In short, the struggle over the 38th parallel was not necessarily about a particular military policy. It was more about symbolic political struggles to maintain the government and administration’s credibility in the hearts and minds of millions and billions of people at home and abroad.

Deadlocked in the Government

“I don’t want any implication...that we are going to war with Russia,” said President Truman on June 26, 1950, “We want to take any steps we have to to push

Credibility, and Command, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, 1997 [1986]); While not focusing on the Korean War, Jonathan Bell’s *The Liberal State On Trial: The Cold War and American Politics in the Truman Years* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004) carefully examines domestic-political side of the Cold War in this period.

the North Koreans behind the line but I don't want to get us over-committed to a whole lot of other things that could mean war [with Russia]. [...]. We must be damn careful.”⁷ In the same cabinet meeting, Secretary of the Army Frank Pace inquired whether America's action would be held only south of the 38th parallel or not. Secretary of State Dean Acheson immediately confirmed this and did not make any suggestion for any action across the line.⁸ As these conversations suggest, inside closed-door communications, policymakers in Washington remained cautious in the early stage of the Korean War. In effect, the Truman administration did not plan to pursue a hard-line policy at all.

In the early phase of the war, the administration emphasized this view repeatedly. At the end of June, for instance, Acheson asserted that the United States' action was taken “solely for the purpose of restoring South Korea to its status prior to the invasion from the north and of reestablishing the peace broken by that aggression.”⁹ Further, an American Army spokesman in Korea reportedly stated that American troops were only involved in fighting “to drive the North Koreans back to the 38th parallel and would stop there and use force if necessary to prevent South Korean troops from advancing beyond the 38th parallel.”¹⁰ At this point, in short, the purpose of the US action was simply “to clear South Korea of North Korean military forces.”¹¹

⁷ The underline in this quote was written in the handwritten note of George Elsey who attended and took notes. See “Note of the NSC meeting,” 29 June 1950, GMEP, Subject File, Box 71, HSTL.

⁸ “Memorandum of Conversation, by the Ambassador at Large (Jessup),” 26 June 1950, *FRUS, 1950 Vol. VII: Korea*, 179.

⁹ “Editorial Note,” *FRUS, 1950 Vol. VII: Korea*, 239.

¹⁰ “Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs (Allison) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Rusk),” 13 July 1950, *FRUS, 1950 Vol. VII: Korea*, 373.

¹¹ “Teleconference with MacArthur,” 26 June 1950, GMEP, Subject File, Box 71, HSTL.

This initial strategy, however, was questioned and challenged throughout the summer of 1950, and eventually abandoned by the end of September. One of its earliest challenges to this policy—to limit American action to the area south of the 38th parallel—came from key officials within the administration, including Truman’s personal advisor Clark Clifford, Director of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs John Allison, and Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs Dean Rusk.¹² John Foster Dulles, more than anyone, believed that it would be “folly” to go back to the division of Korea at the 38th Parallel because, he and his close friend agreed, there would be neither peace nor successful government in a divided Korea.¹³ A similar view was explicitly put forth in the Defense Department’s analysis of the implications of the Korean situation:

The situation in Korea now provides the United States and the free world with the first opportunity to displace part of the Soviet Orbit. [...] The establishment of a free and united Korea and the elimination of the North Korean Communist regime...would be a step in reversing the dangerous strategic trend in the Far East of the past twelve months.¹⁴

As this memo expressed, hard-liners viewed crossing the 38th parallel and the successful unification of Korea as an attractive chance for Washington to wipe out the disgrace of “losing ground” in the Cold War. Such a position can be seen as one of

¹² Letter, Clark Clifford to HST, 29 June 1950, Clark M. Clifford Papers [Hereafter CMCP], “Letters to and from HST,” Box 42, HSTL; “Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs (Allison) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Rusk),” 1 July 1950, *FRUS, 1950 Vol. VII: Korea*, 272. In the margin on this script, Dean Rusk signed, “Agree, DR”; Footnote to “Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs (Allison) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Rusk),” 13 July 1950, *FRUS, 1950 Vol. VII: Korea*, 373.

¹³ Letter, William Mathews to John Foster Dulles, July 22, 1950, Papers of John Foster Dulles (hereafter PJFD), Box 49, “Letter and Memos to Dulles,” Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey; Letter, John Foster Dulles to William Mathews, PJFD, Box 48 “Korea, 1950,” Princeton University.

¹⁴ “Draft Memorandum Prepared in the Department of Defense,” *FRUS, 1950 Vol. VII: Korea* (31 July 1950), 506-7.

the early advocacies of what later became known as the “roll-back” policy of the Eisenhower administration.

Nonetheless, this hard-line viewpoint was not prevalent. Truman thought Clifford’s idea “a little premature.” No consensus for broader action north of the 38th parallel existed even in the State Department, let alone other sections of the government. While hawkish attitudes were becoming popular in society, government officials had more diverse opinions. One of the most vocal arguments came from George F. Kennan and members of the Policy Planning Staff (PPS). They consistently insisted that US forces should stop at the 38th parallel, warning that, if U.S. forces would carry military action north of the line, “the danger of conflict with Chinese communist or Soviet forces would be greatly increased.”¹⁵ The Central Information Agency (CIA) also opposed crossing the parallel. The CIA argued that, although the successful invasion of North Korea would have some merit in terms of increasing the prestige of the United States, it might bring “grave risk of general war” with China and the Soviet Union.¹⁶ The chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff (JCS), Omar Bradley, similarly disagreed with crossing the parallel, but in a different light: military ground operations north of the 38th parallel “should be conducted by South Korean forces since it [is] assumed that the actions [will] probably be of a guerrilla character.”¹⁷

¹⁵ “Draft Memorandum Prepared by the Policy Planning Staff,” 22 July 1950, *FRUS, 1950 Vol. VII: Korea*, 453; George F. Kennan, 14 February 1954, *Princeton Seminars*, Reel 6, Track 1: 8, HSTL.

¹⁶ “Memorandum Prepared in the Central Information Agency,” 18 August 1950, *FRUS, 1950 Vol. VII: Korea*, 600-2.

¹⁷ “Memorandum from JCS to Secretary of Defense,” 7 September 1950, HSTP, Personal File: Subject File “1940-1953: NSC-Meeting File,” Box 180, HSTL.

Furthermore, warnings about the 38th parallel came from European allies. French officials cautioned that, until the U.N. Security Council passed a further resolution on the subject, U.N. forces should not cross the 38th parallel, as this would create a new situation and might bring the USSR and China into the war.¹⁸ British officials, too, doubted whether crossing of the 38th parallel could be justified under the original U.N. resolution, since this resolution was aimed only at repelling attacks from the North. British officials were concerned that fighting north of the 38th Parallel would increase the risk of Soviet intervention. They did not believe that the USSR wished to provoke a major war, but were concerned that the Soviets might dispatch a volunteer force or large military supplies, which would create a situation full of explosive possibilities.¹⁹ “The United States’ reactions to the Far Eastern situation are at present highly emotional, with the result that reasoned arguments may prove to have little appeal,” wrote a British official in the summer of 1950, “The main aim [of the British government] should be to try to convince the United States that their policy should be directed wholly toward the solution of the Korean problem.”²⁰

In the midst of such division of opinion within and beyond the government, President Truman was reluctant to make a decision, and expressed “considerable worry” about the matter.²¹ On July 17, he asked the NSC to prepare a report concerning which course U.S. forces should take after reaching the parallel. Yet, the

¹⁸ “Preliminary Conversation for September Foreign Ministers’ Meeting,” 30 August 1950, HSTP: Korean War Files, No. 17, “Tripartite meeting of foreign ministers, September 1950,” Box 7, HSTL.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Memo, “The implications of the situation in Korea for British foreign policy,” Summer 1950, in CO537/5392, BNA, Kew, UK.

²¹ Memoranda of conversation, “Notes re. NSC Meeting” (September 7, 1950), Dean Acheson Papers (Hereafter DAP), HSTL.

divide was so deep and wide that, throughout the entire summer, the administration lacked a clear, unified opinion on the question. This unusual situation continued until early September. Philip Jessup, a State Department staff member, complained on August 24 that he “could hardly understand how, in the light of the President’s specific request, we could reply to the President merely stating that we have no policy recommendations at this time.”²²

On September 1, 1950, the NSC finally produced the government’s official viewpoint, although it was not a clear-cut, unified opinion. The document (NSC-81) suggested that US forces could invade North Korean territory across the parallel in order to “compel” the enemy to stay “behind” the 38th parallel. Yet, it also warned that crossing the 38th Parallel “would create a situation to which the Soviet Union would be almost certain to react in some manner,” and suggested that, if only South Korean forces were to operate north of the 38th parallel, the risk of general hostilities would be reduced.²³ Although this document was the first to officially authorize the possibility of American forces’ advancement north of the parallel, it remained ambiguous with suggesting two policies at the same time. This vagueness implies that there was still strong opposition to such a course of action.

In short, discussions among State Department bureaucrats were deadlocked, as were those in the CIA and Defense Department. The JCS and European allies issued serious warnings. Further, the NSC’s suggestion to the President did not

²² “Memorandum by Mr. Max Bishop to the Ambassador at Large (Jessup),” 24 August 1950, *FRUS, 1950 Vol. VII: Korea*, 641.

²³ “United States Courses of Action with Respect to Korea (NSC-81/2),” HSTP: Personal File, Subject File, “1940-1953: NSC-Meeting File,” Box 180, HSTL.

really provide a clear answer. Why, then, did the Truman administration decide to cross the 38th parallel?

Public Perceptions Concerning the 38th Parallel

Beyond the governmental level, intriguingly, the discussion over whether or not U.S. forces should cross the 38th parallel was not so complicated. While dissenting voices surely existed, serious debate did not develop among the public in the summer of 1950. The major view commonly held was that Washington should be expected to take a tough stance in foreign policy.

As early as late July, attention among leading commentators had already turned to the question of what to do *after* crossing of the 38th parallel.²⁴ For instance, Walter Lippmann of the *Washington Post* argued that a return to the “status quo” was impossible.²⁵ Even the “leftist” *New York Compass* supported the unification of Korea, rather than halting US forces at the parallel.²⁶ The *Dallas News* asserted, “One thing is clear. Before this thing is over with, we shall have to drive the North Korean army and its Russian staff past the 38th parallel and clean out of North Korea.”²⁷ A local newspaper, the *Ithaca Journal*, also insisted that the United Nations had never recognized the division of Korea, and declared, “Its aim from the beginning has been a united Korea. Why not declare firmly now that a united, free Korea will result from military operations there?”²⁸

²⁴ *Daily Opinion Summary* (25 July 1950), SFP, Box 5, NA.

²⁵ *Special Report American Opinion* (26 July 1950), The Office of Public Opinion Studies (OPOS) ed., Department of State, SFP, Box 39, NA.

²⁶ *Daily Opinion Summary* (25 July 1950), SFP, Box 5, NA.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Editorial, “United Korea,” *Ithaca Journal* (8 August 1950).

By the end of July and early August, a growing number of observers believed that US forces should press their offensive into North Korea. For example, the *Washington Post* and the *Kansas City Star* agreed that U.N. forces must go beyond the 38th parallel. The *Kansas City Star*, Truman's home state newspaper, asserted, "It would be intolerable if, once the tide of battle turns definitely against the aggressors they should be permitted to break off hostilities and simply retire behind the 38th parallel to await a better opportunity to strike again."²⁹ Other newspapers also kept in lockstep with this view. According to a State Department survey in August 1950, the *Providence Journal*, the *Watertown Times*, the *Detroit News*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, and the *Washington Post* supported carrying the offensive beyond the 38th parallel in order to unite Korea under the United Nations.³⁰

In effect, while government officials' discussions were still divided in the entire summer over U.S. war strategy, popular attitudes seemed to show a clear view. The Office of Public Opinion Studies (OPOS) in the State Department summarized this plainly in August:

There is substantial agreement that the Korean problem cannot be satisfactory solved short of reuniting the nation under a government freely elected by the people of the north and south. Those endorsing this view are prepared to see the UN force carry the offensive north of the 38th parallel, if necessary, to achieve these objectives, and they reject any thought of returning to the status quo.³¹

The "substantial agreement" this report described needs a bit more explanation because such a consensus did not actually exist. There were significant disagreements with dissenting voices demanding that U.S. forces halt at the 38th Parallel. In the summer of 1950, for instance, the liberal *New York Post* insisted that

²⁹ "Daily Opinion Summary" (22 August 1950), SFP, Box 5, NA.

³⁰ "Daily Opinion Summary" (20-25 August 1950), SFP, Box 5, NA.

³¹ "Monthly Survey of American Opinion on International Affairs" (August 1950), SFP, Box 12, NA.

the U.N. forces should “stay this side of the 38th parallel.”³² The *Los Angeles Times*, likewise, wrote that U.N. forces should not attempt to cross the line, and argued, “Such a job will have to be undertaken by the South Koreans alone at some time in the more or less distant future.”³³ In a similar manner, the *Chicago Tribune* asserted, “We shall be face to face with the hordes of Russia and red China with a new line more explosively dangerous than the 38th parallel ever was.”³⁴ A radio commentator, Frank Edward at the *Mutual Broadcasting System (MBS)*, also seemed to represent such a viewpoint:

It seems probable that our troops will not penetrate into North Korea. If we crush the Communist armies in South Korea and then stop at the 38th parallel it would amount to a double-barrel victory for us. First, we would then have shown the world we are not to be pushed around, and we would give the lie to the Communist charges that we are imperialists out to gobble up the world.³⁵

As these examples show, there were much disagreements, although it is true that intense discussions never developed among the public at that time, as the aforementioned study of the State Department suggested. The primary factor for this was that those who disagreed restrained themselves in view of popular political culture at that time.

In retrospect, numberless policymakers and ordinary people, as well as American society as a whole in the year of 1950 seemed to have a different set of worldviews: communists and communists sympathizers, regardless Chinese or Korean, or even leftists in the United States, were commonly viewed as monolithically under the tight control of Joseph Stalin; stories of communist spies

³² “Daily Opinion Summary” (19 September 1950), SFP, Box 5, NA.

³³ “Daily Opinion Summary” (22 September 1950), SFP, Box 5, NA.

³⁴ “Monthly Survey of American Opinion on International Affairs” (August 1950), SFP, Box 12, NA.

³⁵ “Daily Opinion Summary” (20 September 1950), SFP, Box 5, NA.

were popular and everywhere in fiction and non-fiction; fear of World War III and atomic attacks was prevalent; many housewives hoarded commodities due to fear of a world war; a lot of children had to wear identification tags in case of their deaths from atomic attack; finally, the Korean War made Senator Joseph McCarthy look more like a prophet than a demagogue.

A schoolteacher, who was a child in the 1950s, succinctly recollected the feeling of the era: “It seems surreal now. Every summer, when I heard heat lightning over the city and the sky would light up, I was convinced it was all over. My whole childhood was built on the notion that the Soviets were the real threat.”³⁶ Such a particular worldview—Cold War fantasy—was shared by millions and billions of people, not just among elite policymakers but also ordinary people, constituting social contexts that made some choices more probable while making others unlikely. Of course, people at the time did not see this mentality as “fantasy.” For many, it was “real.”

In such “reality,” the large majority of Americans viewed the Korean War not as a local conflict in Korea but, rather, as part of a global war against communism. Many also viewed communists, socialists, leftists, social democrats, labor activists, “fellow travelers,” “pinks,” and many others in the United States as tools of Moscow. Such a largely imagined linkage can be seen in California Governor Earl Warren’s address:

³⁶ Joel Brinkley, “Bush and Yeltsin Declare Formal End to Cold War; Agree to Exchange Visits; U.S. Looking for New Course As Superpower Conflict Ends,” *New York Times*, A1, 1 February 1992. The quote appears in John Kenneth White, *Still Seeing Red: How the Cold War Shapes the New American Politics* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 4.

Our country is at war, ostensibly with North Korea, but actually with Soviet Russia. [...] It is foolhardy to believe that Russia would not use [atomic warfare] on us if she could. Our civilian defense program should include protection from almost certain sabotage on the part of fanatical Communists among us who, while enjoying the liberties of this country, glorify in their distorted minds the slavery of Soviet Russia.³⁷

While recent studies on Soviet espionage, to be sure, clarified the extensive networks in the United States, mostly working in the 1930s and the wartime, many others were irrelevant. Yet, diverse groups of people were all suspected and looked upon as monolithic under the direction of the Kremlin, and thus viewed as “traitors” at home, or even “enemies” within, a popular theme which often appeared in political cartoons in newspapers (Picture 1).³⁸

Numerous people took part in the creation and maintenance of this “reality,” in many cases even urging politicians to confront the communist threat more decisively. A lawyer in Ohio, for instance, privately informed on the propaganda publications of a communist organization to his senator, urging him to undertake an investigation, saying “You will find that our government, through its State Department, has been too lenient, and that immediate action should be started to stop propaganda newspapers from being delivered to American citizens.”³⁹ This lawyer was not peculiar; A *Gallup Poll* indicated that 90 percent of the people polled agreed that all members of the Communist Party in heavy industries should be removed from their jobs.⁴⁰ Further, 40 percent insisted that, in the case of war with

³⁷ “‘Expect Sabotage,’ Warren Tells State: Civilian Defense Must Handle Fifth Column and Air Raids, He Says.” *Los Angeles Times* (5 August 1950).

³⁸ Cartoon, “Look Out for Infiltration at Home,” *Ithaca Journal* (14 August 1950); See, also, Jenkins, *Cold War At Home*, 1.

³⁹ Letter, Joseph J. Craciun to Robert A. Taft, 22 April 1950, RATP, Subject File: 1950; Communism, Box 915, LC.

⁴⁰ “American Communists,” *The Gallup Poll* Vol. 2 (21 August 1950), 933.

Russia, Communist Party members should be put in internment camps or prisons.⁴¹

It was not surprising that, given the prevalence of such feelings, longshoremen in New York and Boston refused to discharge tons of Russian crabmeat (Picture 2).⁴²

No wonder that many children at that time had to practice air raids drills in elementary school, with the comical song, "Duck and Cover," and that many of those in New York state were required to wear identification tags in case of their unexpected deaths from an atomic attack.⁴³

Under this particular "reality," those who disagreed with the mainstream line increasingly had a hard time. A high school student at that time, Becky Jenkins, whose father was a member of the Communist Party in California, recalled:

When I was in my first year in high school, the Korean War was going on. In a social studies class, I said something about it being a civil war and [that] America should stay out of it. The teacher responded with "That's the position of the Communists!" and the class started to laugh and scream and hoot at me, yelling "Commie!" I ran home from school sobbing, just humiliated.⁴⁴

The bullying of Ms. Jenkins was not a unique event. Having had a similar experience, a couple in Baltimore wrote a letter to the White House in August: "[I]n this war hysteria nearly everyone who advocates peace seems to be automatically labeled a 'Communist' so that most American citizens are frightened and confused into

⁴¹ "American Communists," *The Gallup Poll* Vol. 2 (21 August 1950), 934. *The Gallup Poll* also indicated that in the winter of 1949, 70 percent of those polled believed that "Russia is trying to build herself up to be the ruling power of the world," while 18 percent viewed Russia's build-up as merely self-defense. In the mid-November 1950, the ratio for the same question became 81 to 9. See "Russia," *The Gallup Poll* Vol. 2 (29 November 1950), 949.

⁴² "No Red Crabmeat," *Newsweek* (28 August 1950), 66.

⁴³ Federal Civil Defense Administration, *Bert the Turtle Says Duck and Cover* (Washington: U.S. G.P.O., 1951); JoAnne Brown, "'A is for Atom, B is Bomb': Civil Defense in American Public Education, 1948-1963," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 75, No.1 (June 1988).

⁴⁴ Griffin Fariello ed., "Becky Jenkins," *Red Scare: Memories of the American Inquisition: An Oral History* (New York: Avon Books, 1995), 71.

supporting your war in Korea and your preparations for bigger and more deadly wars.”⁴⁵

Those who expressed their views, like this Baltimore couple, might be uncommon. “The war fever is running so high in this country,” wrote a progressive in the summer, “the Left is so intimidated that everything to talk for peace with reason and calmness is almost as useless as shouting in the teeth of a hurricane.”⁴⁶ As this author, amidst a preponderance of hawkish sentiments in the summer of 1950, diverse kinds of nonconformists seemed hesitant to continue expressing their opinions in public. In such a climate, the number of dissenting voices seemed smaller than it actually was, while the aggressive voices seemed more numerous than they really were.⁴⁷ In this way, the seeming “consensus” was established, and it was broadly and commonly perceived that the public called for U.S. forces’ advancement beyond the 38th Parallel as the natural course of things.

When the public appeared to be demanding a tough policy unanimously, then, what were the reactions on the side of political figures? As a matter of fact, such a frenzy social climate was not irrelevant to the direction of politics and policymaking processes concerning the Korean War. This was particularly the case in the year of 1950 because it was the year of the midterm elections, the one that the Republican had been angling to stage a comeback.

⁴⁵ Fousek, *To Lead the Free World*, 172.

⁴⁶ Letter, anonymous to Henry A. Wallace, August 9, 1950, Henry A. Wallace Papers (hereafter HAWP), University of Iowa Library Archives, Iowa City, Iowa. (182)

⁴⁷ German sociologist Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann called such phenomenon as “spiral of silence.” See *The Spiral of Silence; Public Opinion—Our Skin*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993[1984]).

Domestic Politics 1950—Republicans

While bureaucrats in Washington were as yet unable to form a solid, unified strategy, many Republican congressmen paid significant attention to political currents in society, swiftly taking advantage of the situation. This was particularly the case because 1950 was a midterm election year. Vividly remembering their bitter defeat in the presidential election of 1948, Republicans were now on the offensive with powerful themes to attack Democrats: “Soft on Communism,” “Who Lost China?” and “Liberty against Socialism.” Although Congress was often described as a weak branch during the Cold War period, its election campaigns in 1950 had a significant impact in terms of pressing the executive branch toward a more aggressive policy. The Korean War was the major issue; the New York Times, in fact, observed in August that the 1950 midterm elections would be decided “almost wholly by public reaction to the Korean War and its multiplying problems at home.”⁴⁸

The strongest critic of the Truman administration’s Korean policy was the powerful Republican Senator from Ohio, Robert A. Taft, who was angling for the Republican nomination in the 1952 presidential election.⁴⁹ While generally agreeing with the administration’s decision to send troops to Korea, Taft sharpened his criticism in a speech on the floor of Congress on June 28, 1950, pointing to the “bungling and inconsistent foreign policy of the administration.”⁵⁰ Meanwhile, Taft heated up its critique of the administration’s refusal to cross the 38th parallel. As

⁴⁸ “Korea To Be Issue In November Vote,” 7 August 1950, *New York Times*.

⁴⁹ James T. Patterson, *Mr. Republican: A Biography of Robert A. Taft* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972).

⁵⁰ Robert A. Taft, “The Korean Crisis: Caused by Wavering Foreign Policy of Administration,” 28 June 1950, RATP, Speeches, Box 1446, LC.

early as July 6, Taft urged U.S. forces not to stop at the 38th parallel.⁵¹ Asked about this in a radio interview, Taft spewed out: “I don’t understand that the administration has decided this question. Personally, I should think we would have to march right on [over the parallel] and at least occupy the southern part of North Korea so that a unified Korea can be set up.”⁵²

Taft’s tough stance on foreign policy issues should be seen in the context of his re-election campaign that year, rather than deriving from his former stance, that is, isolationism. In the postwar period, the Ohio Senator adapted himself to contingent political culture, transforming his political rhetoric from an isolationist stance to an internationalist one. This was particularly the case during the period between the fall of 1949 and the summer of 1950, when Taft re-shaped his stance on foreign policy and anti-communist issues, at least publicly. The background for this change was that he was already seen as a possible candidate for the presidential election in 1952, and Taft himself positioned his senatorial campaign in 1950 as a test case for this future plan.⁵³ In other words, Taft had to win, and by a large margin. Then, the outbreak of the Korean War provided him an opportunity. In a private letter to the chairman of the Minnesota Republican Party in mid-August, Taft forecast effects of the Korean War as an “asset for the Republicans” in their election campaigns that year, indicating that they should not hesitate to point out the weakness of the administration’s foreign policy in their campaigns.⁵⁴ Although the

⁵¹ “Daily Opinion Summary” (24 July 1950), SFP, Box 5, NA; Rosemary Foot, *The Wrong War*, 69.

⁵² Robert A. Taft, Transcribed Edition of Capitol Report No. 63, 19 July 1950, RATP: Legislative File; Korea, 1950, Box 670, LC.

⁵³ Letter, Robert R. McCormick to Robert A. Taft, 23 May 1950 and Taft to McCormick, 29 May 1950, PATP: General Correspondence, “1950, B-W,” Box 33, LC.

⁵⁴ Letter, Robert Taft to Bernard W. LeVander, August 11, 1950, PRAT, Box 924: “Subject File: War,

State of Ohio was seen as Taft country, his re-election campaign was not so easy.

Taft needed to take any advantage he could, and he did.⁵⁵

Yet, Taft's change caused some confusion about his stance on foreign policy issues, even in his own mind. When he received a letter that advocated being aggressive and firm on foreign relations issues, Taft stressed that he was not an isolationist and used strong words. Yet, when he received a letter insisting that the U.S. should not be so involved in foreign matters, Taft emphasized that he had been cautious and critical toward the Truman administration's overly international approach. Also, Taft wavered in his judgment regarding the recognition of the People's Republic of China, depending on who he was writing to. In some private letters Taft remained flexible, even noting that he was not opposed to the recognition of the People's Republic of China, while, in other public situations, he maintained his anti-communist tone in regard to the issue of the recognition of China.⁵⁶ Taft's adaptation to a "cold warrior" in his public image exemplifies the point that political figures often change their stances depending more on shifts in popular political cultures that surrounding them than on their own political philosophy or beliefs. In the case of Korea in the summer of 1950, Taft's choice was to be tough and aggressive, urging a sort of the "roll-back" policy.

Korean, 1950," Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

⁵⁵ In fact, Republicans lost Ohio to Democrats in the 1948 presidential election with a slight margin. Also, in his second senatorial election in 1944, Taft was nearly defeated by labor union supported Democrat. A bid was 50.3% to 49.7%.

⁵⁶ See correspondences to and from Robert A. Taft in RATP: Subject File, "War, Korea 1950," Box 924, LC; RATP: Subject File, "Communism 1950," Box 915, LC; RATP: "General Correspondence 1950," Box 33, LC; RATP: Political File, "1950 Campaign-Ohio Counties," Box 251, LC. Also, for the recognition of the PRC issue, see Letter, Robert A. Taft to Carl Ryan, 25 November 1949, RATP: Subject File "Communism 1949," Box 901, LC and Letter, Robert A. Taft to Lewis Hoskins, 17 January 1950, RATP: Subject File "Foreign Policy 1950," Box 917, LC.

Such a transition in Taft's stance clearly appears in modifications he made to his speeches between 1949 and 1950. For instance, a draft written in 1949 began: "Today's major domestic issue is whether we shall remain in this country a free people in full control of our government, or whether we shall delegate to an all-powerful government the right to direct our local communities, agriculture, industry, labor, and the daily lives of our citizens."⁵⁷ The tone in this speech was vintage Taft, an anti-New Deal politician who focused mainly on domestic issues, with a strong aversion to statism. The same speech draft evolved during his 1950 campaign with the deletion and addition of words; it read:

Today's major issue is whether we shall remain in this country a free people in full control of our government, or whether we shall delegate to an all-powerful government the right to direct our local communities, agriculture, industry, labor and the daily lives of our citizens. This is the struggle between socialism and liberty. It is a conflict that rages not only in this country but throughout the world. On the world stage the battle is between free government and Communism—the most extreme form of socialism denying most affectively the liberty and responsibility of the human soul. This is the root of the "cold war." In this country the struggle is no less intense, and it promises to be the principal issue of the 1950 election.⁵⁸

The message Taft insisted was the same, but the context had changed radically from being dominated by a domestic tone to a more international one. It is important to note that Taft's opinion remained the same, and it was simply connected with and projected onto international issues. In other words, Taft's international view was not based on his study of international relations or local situations in foreign countries; his domestic views slid over into the global arena. It had more to do with electoral campaign tactics than strategic and military considerations.

⁵⁷ "Statement of Principles, Policies and Objectives of Republican Members of Congress," RATP: Political File "Campaign Miscellany," Box 307, LC.

⁵⁸ "Liberty Against Socialism: The Issue in 1950," RATP: Political File "Campaign Miscellany," Box 307, LC. The underline in the quote is mine to emphasize Taft's changes.

Such a tendency was not exclusively Taft's. Although scholars have focused on the Cold War's impact on domestic politics, the opposite tendency—the impact of political context on foreign policymaking—should be further examined. The “politicality” of foreign policy issues in the summer of 1950 cannot be ignored. It had been commonly thought, as the *New York Times* and other media forecast in the July and August, that the Korean War and its multiplying problems at home would become the central issue of the 1950 midterm elections (Picture 3).⁵⁹ Keenly realizing this, many Republicans took full advantage of the situation. Richard Nixon, then a rookie senatorial candidate in California, for instance, took full advantage of foreign policy issues in his election campaign. He knew that wages were growing, employment was up, and farmers and small businesses had prospered since the last elections, and he knew that it would be difficult to attack Democrats on domestic issues. Thus, as his friend Oscar Bigler advised him, foreign policy issues became an appropriate topic for criticizing the administration.⁶⁰

Similar tactics were adopted nationwide, as Republicans in other states similarly took advantage of the situation, designing the central issue of the election as “the tragic [foreign] policy pursued by the [Truman] administration for five years that culminated in the war in Korea.”⁶¹ By the end of the summer, the Republican National Committee had made up and circulated a 59-page pamphlet, *Background to Korea*, which summarized the historical events leading to the war in Korea,

⁵⁹ “Korea To Be Issue In November Vote,” 7 August 1950, *New York Times*.

⁶⁰ Letter, Oscar Bigler to Richard Nixon, July 24, 1950, Papers of William Knowland (hereafter PWK), Carton 90: “1950 Campaign,” Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley, CA.

⁶¹ “Foreign Policy Set As G.O.P. Vote Issue,” 8 August 1950, *New York Times*.

underlining the administration's "failures" in foreign policy toward East Asia.⁶²

Likewise, Senator Taft heightened the tone of his criticism of the administration and the State Department, saying that the U.S. government had been unprepared diplomatically and militarily to meet communist aggression, and that communist sympathizers in the government should be gotten rid of.⁶³ By the end of August, the Ohio Senator repeatedly asserted that U.S. forces would have to prepare to go north of the 38th parallel not only "to bring [about] the unification of Korea," but also "to punish the aggressor."⁶⁴ By the crucial month of September, Republicans had gone fully on the offensive, demanding a tough foreign policy in Korea.

Domestic Politics 1950—Democrats

Democrats and members of the Truman administration were keenly aware of and sensitive to the potency of Republican charges. As early as June 27, 1950, Joseph O'Mahoney, Senator from Wyoming and member of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, warned President Truman that foreign policy on the Korean issues would "undoubtedly be used to support a charge that our policy was soft toward the Communists in Korea."⁶⁵ As O'Mahoney pointed out, they had already realized that more failures in foreign relations would give people a dismal view of the administration, which would subsequently hurt Democrats. They also hoped, however, that the opposite would be true, as well. One observer wrote in the late

⁶² Republican National Committee ed., "Background to Korea," GMEP: Subject File "Politics, 1950," Box 91, HSTL.

⁶³ Secretary of State [Dean Acheson]'s Press and Radio Conference, 28 September 1950, HSTP: President's Secretary's File, "Secretary of State Press Conference," Box 54, HSTL.

⁶⁴ "Daily Opinion Summary" (25 September 1950), SFC, Box 5, LC. Senator Margaret Smith (R., Me.) agreed with this view, too.

⁶⁵ Letter, Joseph C. O'Mahoney to HST, 27 June 1950, Student File: Korean War, Box 1.

summer of 1950: "If the counteroffensive in Korea is successful [...], if Russia does not throw her air [force to Korea], then that will greatly help the Democrats. They can go to the country with good news."⁶⁶ In short, a more favorable picture of the Korean War, Democrats thought, would help them in the November elections.⁶⁷

Knowing the potency of foreign policy issues as a double-edged sword, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee spent its full effort in the campaigns through publishing several pamphlets, as well as educating candidates about how to respond to questions concerning foreign policy issues. Some of the questions were along these lines: "Is it true that the Truman Administration has been 'soft toward communism?'" The answer provided was: "No. Rather than being soft toward communism, the Truman Administration has taken the lead in opposing communism and strengthening freedom in the world." This answer then went on through the administration's "achievements," such as economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey, as well as the Marshall Plan and NATO.⁶⁸

Such a use of foreign policy issues in domestic campaigns was noteworthy because domestic politics, in turn, began demanding a certain course of direction in U.S. "foreign" policy. Looking back, the Truman administration's first anti-communist policies were pronounced in March 1947—the Truman Doctrine and Loyalty Security Program—in their struggles to roll back Democrats' defeats in the midterm elections in November of 1946. Then, in 1950, Truman's renewed anti-

⁶⁶ Letter, Carter Clarke to Robert Fellers, September 12, 1950, PBFF, MacArthur Memorial Archives, Norfolk, VA.

⁶⁷ Such view was often discussed; see, for example, "Washington Wire," *New Republic* (25 September 1950).

⁶⁸ Democratic National Committee ed., "Questions and Answers on Foreign Policy," 3, GMEP: Subject File "Politics, 1950," Box91, HSTL.

communist stance on foreign policy issues appeared in late February in response to Joseph McCarthy's (in)famous Wheeling speech.⁶⁹ Two month later, the President adopted strong language in denouncing the Russians, particularly stressing that Americans "must make ourselves heard round the world in a great campaign of truth."⁷⁰

Seen in this way, we can see that President Truman increasingly toughened his "Cold War" rhetoric and policy more along the line of domestic political and social situations than with military and diplomatic considerations. Such a pattern was further manifested and confirmed following the outbreak of the Korean War. The actual fighting in Korea and McCarthyite attacks at home made international and domestic affairs appear interrelated. Normally this was not considered negative; it was described as "consistency." It was, in fact, formally pronounced in Democrats' election campaigns, as one pamphlet declared that American foreign abroad and domestic policy at home were "two sides of the same coin. Foreign policy is a logical and necessary *extension* of our program at home."⁷¹

Professional diplomats and military officers might have argued that diplomatic and military affairs were special and should be considered by experts. Yet, in practice, these affairs were seldom isolated from politics at home. The Truman administration was no exception. Vice President Alben Barkley, who had been responsible for the 1950 midterm campaigns, suggested in the NSC meeting in

⁶⁹ "President Address at Alexandria, VA, on Foreign Policy," 22 February 1950, GMEP: Subject File "Truman administration: Speech File," Box 39, HSTL; "Daily Summary of Opinion Developments," GMEP: Subject File "Truman administration: Speech File," Box 39, HSTL.

⁷⁰ "President Address to the American Society of Newspaper Editors," 19 April 1950, GMEP: Subject File "Truman administration: Speech File," Box 39, HSTL.

⁷¹ "Questions about the Battle in Korea," 2, GMEP: Subject File "Politics, 1950," Box91, HSTL.

August that the forthcoming document on the Korean situation (NSC-81) should take into consideration possible Congressional reactions.⁷² Barkley's suggestion was telling, because it revealed the essence of the 38th parallel question: it was not just a distant military concern but also a domestic political issue.

Throughout the campaign, in fact, younger Democratic members of Congress were itching to defend the conduct of U.S. foreign policy and to refute some of the wild charges against the administration and State Department. The trouble was, as one freshman Congressman complained, that "the State Department does not give us enough equipment and ammunition with which to answer these charges."⁷³ The Democratic Campaign Committee sent a memorandum to White House staff on September 2, 1950, requesting that they needed "a clear, affirmative statement of the *achievement* of American foreign policy, including our entire policy in the Far East."⁷⁴ In the critical weeks between late August and September, as midterm elections drew near, domestic politics demanded that the administration have a clearer and tougher foreign policy and achievement abroad.

Aftermath of the Inchon Landing

The sweeping victory of U.S. forces in the Inchon Landing Operation, on September 15, 1950, further complicated the entanglement of domestic and foreign

⁷² "Record of Actions by the National Security Council at its Sixty-Fourth Meeting, August 10, 1950," 10 August 1950, HSTP: Personal File, Subject File, 1945-1953, National Security Council: Actions, Record of 1947-1953, Box 167, HSTL. This NSC meeting had been preparing a document, "Future United Policy with Respect to North Korea," which later became the NSC-81.

⁷³ "Conversation with Congressman Clinton D. McKinnon," GMEP: Subject File, "Politics, 1950: Elections," Box 92, HSTL.

⁷⁴ Memorandum, Ken Hechler to Charles Murphy, "Campaign Materials on Foreign Policy-Defense," 2 September 1950, GMEP: Subject File "Politics, 1950: Elections," Box 92.

affairs, as well as political and military issues. Viewed from a military perspective, the Inchon landing itself was not necessarily a bolt out of the blue. Nor was it solely the product of military genius General Douglas MacArthur. As political scientist Park Myung-lim points out, a blueprint for the Inchon campaign had been already prepared by the American and South Korean military as a contingency plan prior to the outbreak of the Korean War.⁷⁵ In addition, Chinese military officers and Mao Zedong also foresaw an American counterattack at Inchon.⁷⁶ Furthermore, Kim Il-sung, especially after late August, began preparing for the defense of Inchon.⁷⁷ From a military stand point, the landing itself was “quite an average strategy for counterattack.”⁷⁸ It was not nearly the miracle as it was seen to be.

Nonetheless, political effects were undoubtedly dramatic. Many Americans took an even more optimistic view regarding the ability of the U.S. forces to re-unify Korea, accelerating demands for more aggressive American action. After the success of the Inchon Operation, the approval rate for the U.S. intervention in Korea jumped; according to a study taken by the National Opinion Research Center, 81 percent of those surveyed believed that the United States was right in entering the war, while 13 percent thought it wrong, while the ratio for same question had been 75 to 21 percent in July.⁷⁹ As this shift in the supporting ratio showed, those who previously disagreed with Truman’s policy had changed their attitudes, and begun showing their support following the successful operation in Korea. A Baltimore man, for

⁷⁵ Park Myung-lim, *Sensō to Heiwa: Chōsen Hantō 1950*, 311-313.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 314.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 319-330.

⁷⁸ Wada Haruki, *Chosen senso zenshi* [A Complete History of the Korean War] (Tokyo, 2002), 191.

⁷⁹ “Special Report American Opinion” (30 October 1950), SFP, Box 39, NA. The poll also indicated that Americans who had attended college were appreciably more in favor of America’s intervention (90 percent) than were those with only a grammar school education (74 percent).

instance, wrote to the White House in early October expressing profound gratitude as far as the military action in Korea was concerned, even though he had never voted for Democrats before, and still thought many of the administration's actions and policies at home and abroad mistaken.⁸⁰

With the rise of the optimistic mood following the success of the Inchon landing, demands for crossing the 38th parallel significantly increased among newspapers and commentators. (Picture 4) The *Denver Post*, for instance, maintained that U.N. forces should "march above the 38th parallel and occupy the whole of Korea until new elections under U.N. supervision [could] be held."⁸¹ A *National Broadcasting Company (NBC)* commentator asserted that stopping at the parallel would offer "no satisfactory solution."⁸² The *Boston Post* even argued that it would be "folly" to keep U.N. forces below the parallel. The *New York Herald-Tribune* likewise insisted:

To imagine that it is now possible to go back to the fictitious 38th parallel, to sit down and negotiate the freedom and unification of Korea across that passion-charged line, is to imagine an absurdity.... [Korean unity] is the test of the [UN] assembly's ability to live up to its principles.⁸³

Such a hard-line was shared by other papers, including the *Washington Star*, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, the *Baltimore Sun*, the *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, and the *Detroit Free Press*.⁸⁴ Major news magazines articles also urged U.S. forces to cross the 38th Parallel and destroy the North Korean Army. Among them, even a pro-

⁸⁰ Letter, George W. Constable to HST, 12 October 1950, HSTP: Official File, 471-B, Korean Emergency, HSTL.

⁸¹ "Daily Opinion Summary" (19 September 1950), SFP, Box 5, NA.

⁸² "Daily Opinion Summary" (26 September 1950), SFP, Box 5, NA.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

Democratic magazine *Newsweek* insisted, “‘Keep going’ was the motto for all the U.N. forces” on the front.⁸⁵

Needless to say, many congressmen lined up, as well, after the success of the Inchon Operation, advocating a more aggressive policy.⁸⁶ A notable example was California Republican William Knowland, who charged that the failure to cross the 38th parallel would be “appeasement” of Russia. By the same token, Pennsylvania Representative Hardie Scott accused the State Department of seeking to “subvert our military victory” by calling for a halt at the 38th parallel.⁸⁷ It is no wonder that the *American Broadcasting Companies (ABC)* and *MBS* felt able to declare in late September that sentiments in Congress were “overwhelmingly in favor of going through with this job [to cross the parallel and unify Korea].”⁸⁸

There were, to be sure, a significant number of dissenting voices regarding the crossing of the 38th parallel, even following the sweeping victory of the Inchon landing. According to a Gallup Poll taken immediately after the Inchon landing, 64 percent of those surveyed urged American forces to continue fighting in the northern part of Korea until the North Koreans surrendered, while 27 percent

⁸⁵ “Keep Going,” *Newsweek* (2 October 1950); “Victory Looms—So Does 38th Parallel,” *Newsweek* (2 October 1950). *Newsweek*’s columnist Ernest Lindley had been insisting that UN forces’ crossing of the 38th parallel would be justified both legally and historically. *U.S. News and World Report* (25 August; 1 September 1950) and *New Republic* (25 September; 9 October 1950) made similar arguments. A liberal magazine, *The Nation*, was one of the few magazines that remained critical of the crossing of the parallel. See “Deadly Parallel,” (14 October 1950); “Unanswered Question” (28 October 1950); and “Threat Out of China” (11 November 1950).

⁸⁶ Rosemary Foot, *The Wrong War*, 69. In addition to Taft, General Dwight Eisenhower, who was already seen as another possible Republican candidate for the presidential election of 1952, similarly questioned the stopping of US forces at the parallel. Eisenhower, then President of Columbia University, said that US forces “[might] have to cross the 38th parallel to wage a successful war.” See “Eisenhower Backs Invasion If Needed,” *New York Times* (21 July 1950).

⁸⁷ “Daily Opinion Summary” (22 September 1950), SFP, Box 5, LC.

⁸⁸ “Daily Opinion Summary” (22 September 1950), SFP, Box 5, LC.

answered that U.S. forces should stop fighting at the parallel.⁸⁹ While showing unmistakable majority support for an aggressive policy, it is important to note that nearly one third polled continued to oppose carrying the war into North Korean territory. Some major newspapers, likewise, expressed skepticism, such as the *Atlanta Constitution* stating that the success of the Inchon Operation “eliminate[d] the necessity for driving the invaders back beyond the 38th parallel.” Yet, such oppositional voices were becoming less and less audible. As historian Allan Millet points out, the success at Inchon created a “virulent case of victory disease,” which, indeed, silenced critiques and opposition.

Furthermore, this was just before the 1950 midterm elections (Picture 5). As we have seen, foreign and domestic issues were lumped together in election campaigns, becoming points of political contention, as if it were an issue of black and white, or even good and evil. In fact, a Republican candidate’s one-minute advertisement on radio appealed voters in that way:

In 1950 when the free world has been challenged in Korea by the totalitarian forces of international communism, it is the responsibility of every registered American voter to go to the polls. The eyes of freemen and those who hope to be free all around the world will be upon us on November Seventh. Regardless of partisan affiliation, American citizens have an opportunity on November Seventh of serving notice on the forces of international communism that they are wrong when they speak of decadent democracy.⁹⁰

In a climate so highly charged with domestic politics in the early fall of 1950, international and military issues became points of domestic contention; or, more

⁸⁹ “Korea,” *The Gallup Poll*, Vol. 2 (13 October 1950), 929. The poll was held September 17-22. The *Gallup poll*’s question was “What do you, yourself, think—should the fighting stop when we have succeeded in pushing the North Koreans back over the line from where they started—or do you think we should continue the fight in their own territory until they have surrendered.” 27% answered “Stop fighting,” 64% answered “Continue fighting,” and 9% answered “No opinion.”

⁹⁰ Memo, “Script for the One Minute Spot on Radio,” October 28, 1950, PWK, Carton 2, “1950 Campaign,” Bancroft Library, Berkeley, CA.

precisely speaking, domestic struggles slid over into foreign and strategic issues. Several professional diplomats felt uncomfortable with such a development. Characteristically more concerned with international strategy and realpolitik than domestic politics and election campaigns, George F. Kennan believed that it would be far beyond U.S. capabilities to keep Korea permanently out of the sphere of Soviet influence. He frankly admitted that it would not be essential for the United States to have an anti-Soviet Korean regime in all of Korea for all time. Kennan even added: “[W]e could even eventually tolerate for a certain period of time a Korea nominally independent but actually amenable to Soviet influence.”⁹¹

The more politically astute Dean Acheson, on the other hand, rejected Kennan’s view: “Such was national interest in the abstract. In view of public opinion and political pressures in the concrete, ideas such as these could only be kept in mind as warnings not to be drawn into quicksands.”⁹² According to Kennan’s recollection, John Foster Dulles refused Kennan’s advice on the same grounds. From a politician’s viewpoint, Dulles argued, it would confuse American public opinion and weaken support for the President’s programs for the strengthening of American defenses.⁹³

Kennan’s strategic thinking might have been well justified. After all, crossing the 38th Parallel, occupying North Korea, and having a one thousand mile border with the People’s Republic of China and the U.S.S.R. on land would create far more

⁹¹ Memorandum, George F. Kennan to Dean Acheson, 21 August 1950, Student File “Korean War,” Box 1.

⁹² Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1969), 446.

⁹³ George F. Kennan, *Memoir 1925-1950* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1967), 495.

difficult military tasks, than having the defense line on the sea, where American forces had far more advantage. Even if not defending on the sea, as Kennan argued, the defense line at the “waist” of the Korean Peninsula would be far shorter and easier to hold, than having it at the long border with China and the Soviet Union.⁹⁴

But Kennan’s view was far removed from the social and political climate of the summer of 1950. As we have seen, foreign policy was rapidly becoming the major domestic election issue, with Korea the main focus.⁹⁵ Observing such a domestic-political influence on foreign policy considerations, British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin lamented in early September 1950:

[T]he atmosphere is very highly charged in the U.S. at this moment and with the elections coming on in November the administration is going to find it very difficult to take any step which does not have popular support. It is most unfortunate that the Far East should have become a party political issue in the U.S. but I am afraid we have to accept that this is so.⁹⁶

Based on this acceptance of the American domestic-political situations, the British government modified its stance on the 38th Parallel issue following the U.S. victory in the Inchon landing, from cautious and skeptical to more optimistic. Now, London kept step with Washington and stopped critiquing it as reckless, newly arguing that the unification of Korea had been the primary object since 1948, and that the “imaginary line” had never had international recognition as a boundary.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ George F. Kennan, Princeton Seminar, Reel 6, Track 1, Page 8, February 14, 1954, HSTL.

⁹⁵ Telegram, Washington DC to Foreign Office, UK, August 26, 1950 in PREM8/1156: “Suggested visit of Prime Minister to Washington for meeting with President Truman for discussions with USA on international situation, Korea and defense,” BNA, Kew, UK.

⁹⁶ Telegram, Foreign Secretary (Ernest Bevin) to High Commissioner for the UK, Delhi, India, for Pandit Nehru, September 4, 1950, in DO133/22: “China: Political Situation,” BNA, Kew UK.

⁹⁷ Memorandum from the Secretary of State (Bevin) to the Cabinet “New York Meetings: Developments in Far Eastern Policy,” October 6, 1950, in CAB21/2102: “The War in Korea: the implication of, on our foreign policy in other parts of the world: Co-operation with USA,” BNA; Telegram, “yingguo waijiao dachen Beiwen zhi Zhou Enlai zongli de dian [A telegram from British Foreign Secretary Bevin to Premier Zhou Enlai],” Ernest Bevin to Zhou Enlai, October 10, 1950, in

Britain's drastic change of stance might have aroused further distrust in Beijing toward the West in general. Beijing had been carefully observing the situation in Korea, and quickly issued a series of warning immediately following the Inchon landing. On September 25, for instance, acting chief of staff of the People's Liberation Army Nieh Jungchen told Indian ambassador to China, K. M. Panikkar, that China would not "sit back with folded hands and let the Americans come up to the border."⁹⁸ Having received reports and realized the strong tone of the Beijing leadership, Indian Prime Minister Nehru repeatedly warned London that U.N./U.S. forces should not cross the 38th Parallel. Writing to British Foreign Secretary Bevin, Nehru argued:

That any decision or even suggestion that UN forces will move beyond 38th parallel is likely to precipitate what might well be world catastrophe is, I fear, more than probable. If...Peking is envisaging military action, announcement that UN forces are going to advance beyond 38th parallel will add fuel to fire. [...]. Manchurian border incidents and support of Chiang Kai-shek's army in Formosa have also led many in China to believe that invasion of China is contemplated. Any attempt to cross the 38th parallel will convince them that such invasion is imminent and they will react accordingly. I would, therefore, urge with all the emphasis at my command, that NO action be taken by the UN that would involve crossing the 38th parallel.⁹⁹

Repeating his objection four times in his long message, Nehru strongly argued against the idea of crossing the parallel northward in late September.

Very few, however, took the Chinese messages seriously.¹⁰⁰ The British Foreign Office, for example, quickly concluded in September 29 that it would be "unlikely" that China would intervene in Korea, on the grounds that Beijing still

110-00024-22, FMA, Beijing, PRC.

⁹⁸ Quoted in Rosemary Foot, *The Wrong War*, 79; (Whiting, China Cross the Yalu, 93).

⁹⁹ Telegram, High Commissioner from the UK, Delhi, to Foreign Secretary in New York, September 27, 1950, in DO133/23: "China: Political Situation, Sept. 4-30, 1950," BNA, Kew UK.

¹⁰⁰ Several policymakers did continue to disagree to the idea of crossing the 38th parallel, including George F. Kennan, O. Edmund Clubb, and James Webb. See, for instance, Foot, 80.

faced a mountain of difficult problems at home, and that China lacked the basic military capability to fight the United States.¹⁰¹ Furthermore, it was argued that it was too late for China to enter the war.¹⁰² Observing the situation in a similar manner, the large majority of officials in Washington also refused to take Beijing's warnings seriously, viewing them, as Dean Acheson put it, as merely a "bluff."¹⁰³

The Decision to Cross the 38th Parallel

Throughout the summer of 1950, opinions as to crossing the 38th parallel in various sectors of the government were divided, as were those of Truman's top advisors. However, newspaper reporters asked the same questions again and again in this period: "Will the US forces cross the 38th parallel?"¹⁰⁴ This question became more urgent after the success of the Inchon Landing on September 15, 1950. U.S./U.N. forces were approaching closer to the 38th parallel day by day. Recalling those days, one State Department official described the mood at that time: "It was felt in Washington, particularly in the State Department, that we were completely justified in throwing the North Koreans back into their own country, but to occupy it raised many questions."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ Telegram, Foreign Office, UK, to Washington, September 29, 1950, in FO371/84529: "Various reactions to events in Korea."

¹⁰² Telegram, Peking to Foreign Office, UK, October 26, 1950, in DO133/24: "China: Political Situation, Sept 29-Oct 24, 1950," BNA.

¹⁰³ FRUS 1950 VII: 868-869; Scholars have provided various explanations for this attitude. See, for instance, Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War*, 169-170; William Stueck, *The Korean War*, 230-231; Steven Casey, *Selling the Korean War*, 99-100.

¹⁰⁴ President's Press and Radio Conference, 31 August 1950, 21 September 1950, and 28 September 1950, HSTP: President's Secretary's Files, "Press Conference File," Box 53; Secretary of State's Press and Radio Conference, 30 August 1950, HSTP: President's Secretary's Files, "Press Conference File," Box 54; Eben Ayers Diary, 1 and 28 September 1950, Eben Ayers Papers (Hereafter EAP), Box 21, HSTL.

¹⁰⁵ Letter, James E. Webb to John W. Snyder, James E. Webb Papers (Hereafter JEWP), Box 450, HSTL.

During this period, government officials exchanged quite a lot of correspondence within departments and with ambassadors in foreign countries regarding the issue.¹⁰⁶ Nevertheless, none of these documents suggests a critical decision. This is because the core of the problem was not about a particular foreign policy or military tactics; it was more about politics. In fact, many documents in this period stated a similar line: the decision would be made at the highest level of the government.¹⁰⁷ Even as late as September 26, 1950, a State Department staff member James Webb composed a directive to American officials in Korea to “make every effort discourage Rhee or other ROK spokesmen making pronouncements regarding ROK’s unilateral extension of authority north of 38th parallel” because the matter was “being considered at a higher government level.”¹⁰⁸

And yet, it is important to note that officials at the highest level of the administration did not have a clear policy, either. As a matter of fact, they did not necessarily see the policy of crossing the 38th parallel as an appealing one, and were extremely concerned about possible consequences. Rejecting Kennan’s advice as “national interest in the abstract,” Dean Acheson did see the high level of risk involved in crossing the parallel. In Princeton Seminars that were held in 1954, former policymakers, including Dean Acheson, George F. Kennan, and Averell Harriman, gathered and discussed their foreign policy decisions in the Truman administration. In one session, Harriman recalled the situation that they faced with respect to the 38th parallel issue, and asked Acheson:

¹⁰⁶ See for example documents in HSTP: Korean War File, Department of State, Box 6, HSTL.

¹⁰⁷ See for example documents in July and September 1950 in HSTP: Korean War File, Department of State, Box 6, HSTL.

¹⁰⁸ PHST, Korean War File, Box 6, “Dept of State,”

I think I remember—if I'm wrong, correct me—you are talking in my presence, and I think perhaps to me personally, about the concern that you had when we went over the 38th Parallel; you recognized that of course because of...the success of the Inchon Landings that there would be no way to stop it. But as I recall it, you were concerned over the possible effects of our going beyond the 38th Parallel, and I got the impression that you would have been happier at that time if we hadn't gone across. Although you fully recognized that the military situation as it was, and the possibility of destroying the North Korean army, that it was not possible to stop.¹⁰⁹

In Harriman's observation, Acheson would have been "happier at that time" if the U.S. army would not have to cross the parallel. Answering to the question, Acheson said succinctly: "That is true, Averell."

As Harriman's recollection shows, even top officials were not necessarily in favor of an aggressive policy. Yet, with initial defeats in Korea, the American public more or less became irritated, if not about to lose confidence, with the administration's lack of preparedness. The Truman administration had already been criticized as being too "soft on communism." The president could not accept any more criticism, and desperately sought chances to show his "toughness." What the Truman administration really needed in late summer of 1950 was not to "scare" or "deceive" the American people to "sell" its hard-line defense program. American domestic feeling was already ahead of them in that sense. What the Truman administration desired was, as John Foster Dulles described, "some affirmative action in the field of foreign affairs which would restore the *confidence* of the American people that the government had a capacity to deal with the Communist menace."¹¹⁰ The administration needed "achievement," as its election campaign committee had been demanding persistently.

¹⁰⁹ Averell Harriman, Princeton Seminars, February 14, 1954; Reel 6, Track 1: 7, HSTL.

¹¹⁰ Thomas Christensen, *Useful Adversaries: Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization, and Sino-American Conflict, 1947-1958* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 123.

Such an entanglement between domestic and foreign affairs and between political and military issues clearly appeared on Friday, September 29, 1950, a day that marked one of the most critical watersheds in “Cold War history,” not only because the administration finally approved the decision to go north of the parallel at the highest meetings, but also it shifted the basic stance of U.S. foreign policy.

That morning, the Truman administration held a cabinet meeting at the White House. At the outset, members briefly discussed European defense, and then, for the most part, discussed domestic issues, such as increases in consumer prices, the decline in the employment rate, housewives’ hoarding, and ongoing political campaign tours in fifteen states. Then, Vice President Alben Barkley raised a question as to whether personal attacks should be made on Republican candidates. To this question, President Truman replied that they should not make personal attacks but should recite the record of the Democratic Party. Another member insisted that they should stress the successful achievements of the Truman administration in fighting communism in Greece, Iran, Turkey, and Europe.¹¹¹

Then, Secretary of State Dean Acheson cut in and added. “Korea will be used as a stage to prove to the world what Western Democracy can do to help the underprivileged countries of the world.” Acheson explained, “Plans are being developed to set up a commission to go into Korea and start rehabilitation.” The Secretary added, “The 38th parallel [will] be ignored.”¹¹² This was the first and last time that the Truman Cabinet acknowledged their decision concerning the

¹¹¹ “Notes on Cabinet Meetings II, 1946-1953,” 29 September 1950, Matthew J. Connelly Papers (Hereafter MJCP), HSTL.

¹¹² Ibid; Rosemary Foot, *The Wrong War*, 70; Arnold Offner, *Another Such Victory*, 389.

advancement of US forces into North Korea. It is symbolic that the issue of crossing the 38th parallel was brought up in relation to the topic of domestic political campaigns. It is also suggestive that Acheson linked the 38th parallel issue with America's credibility in the world—rhetoric used repeatedly in the years that followed.

At around noon, Truman, Acheson, and Secretary of Defense George Marshall had lunch together and held another meeting at the Blair House, where they finally agreed, at this highest level, to give General Douglas MacArthur the green light to cross the 38th parallel northward. Although Truman had approved this policy two days earlier with some conditions, by this decision, American forces' invasion of North Korea for the purpose of unifying the divided countries was formally authorized.¹¹³ Secretary Marshall then sent a telegram to MacArthur, stating, "We want you to feel unhampered tactically and strategically to proceed north of the 38th parallel."¹¹⁴

Furthermore, at three o'clock in the afternoon, these three went back to the White House, attended the National Security Council (NSC) meeting, and officially approved NSC-68/1. Since the discovery of that confidential document in 1975, diplomatic historians have emphasized its significant role. Historian Ernest May, for instance, writes, "NSC-68 laid out the rationale for US strategy during much of the cold war," and Walter LaFeber succinctly describes it as the "American blueprint for

¹¹³ Dean Acheson, *Princeton Seminars*, 13 February 1954, Reel 3, Track 2: 1, HSTL; Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, 452-63. Truman had already approved US forces' crossing of the 38th parallel on September 27, but requested MacArthur to submit a military plan north of the parallel in advance. See *FRUS, 1950: Vol. 7* (27 September 1950).

¹¹⁴ U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1950: Vol. 7* (29 June 1950), 826.

waging the Cold War.”¹¹⁵ It is important to note, however, that the document was not considered as such when it was written. Paul Nitze, a chief writer of the document, described it at that time as “a statement of [US foreign] policy to be followed over the next four or five years.”¹¹⁶ The document was issued in April 1950, but was rejected at first, and had been pending throughout the entire summer. It would have gone nowhere had it not been for the Korean War and multiplying problems related to the war at home. The war increased the “importance” of the document, and it was finally approved on that Friday afternoon, the same day the administration formally decided to cross the 38th parallel.

The two decisions made on September 29, 1950, not only represented the militaristic escalation of the Korean War, but also signified the solidification of the “Cold War” framework, destroying any possibilities for meaningful diplomacy between the West and East. It is important to note that these policies emerged not so much results of geopolitical considerations or policymakers’ personalities as their judgments concerning domestic politics and popular sentiments at that time. This was the moment that the notion of “containment,” which had been advocated by George F. Kennan since 1946, was replaced with a more aggressive, militarized, and more socially constructed strategy of “roll back,” which would be popularized from then on, leading to the heyday of the Cold War. Having made such crucial

¹¹⁵ Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-2006*, tenth edition (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008), 103-105; Walter LaFeber, “Crossing the 38th: The Cold War in Microcosm” (1974), 81; and Ernest May ed., *American Cold War Strategy: Interpreting NSC 68* (Boston: Bedford, 1993), vii.

¹¹⁶ “Minutes of the 68th Meeting of the National Security Council held on Friday, September 29, 1950 in the Conference Room of the White House,” 29 September 1950, HSTP: Personal File, Subject File, 1940-1953, National Security Council-Meeting File, Box 180, HSTL. The NSC-68/1, titled “United States Objectives and Programs For National Security,” was subsequently approved by Truman the next day, and circulated as NSC 68/2.

political decisions on that Friday, President Truman left the White House for a planned week's vacation.

Chapter 3 Pictures:

Picture 1:

"Look Out for Infiltration at Home!"

Ithaca Journal
August 14, 1950

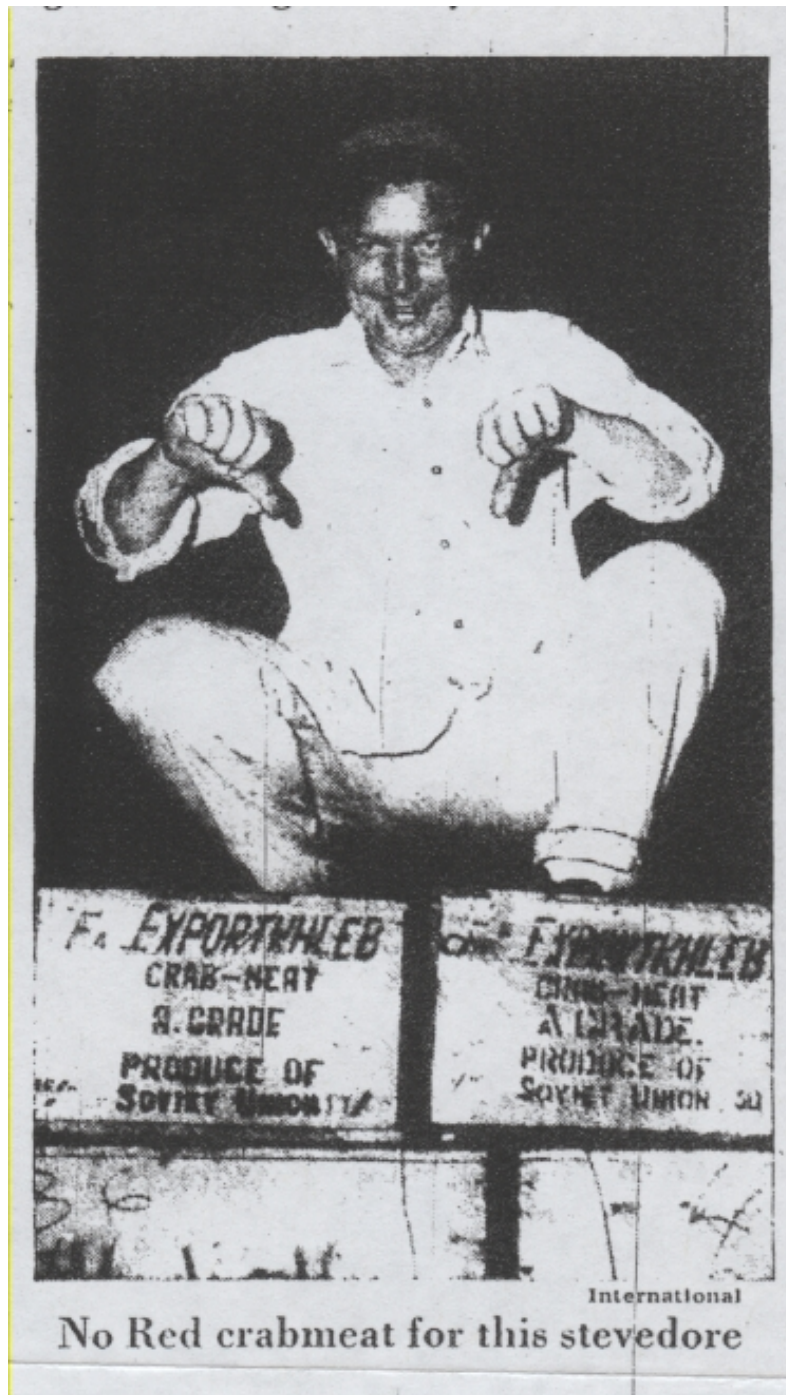


Picture 2:

"No Red Crabmeat for this stevedore"

Newsweek

August 28, 1950



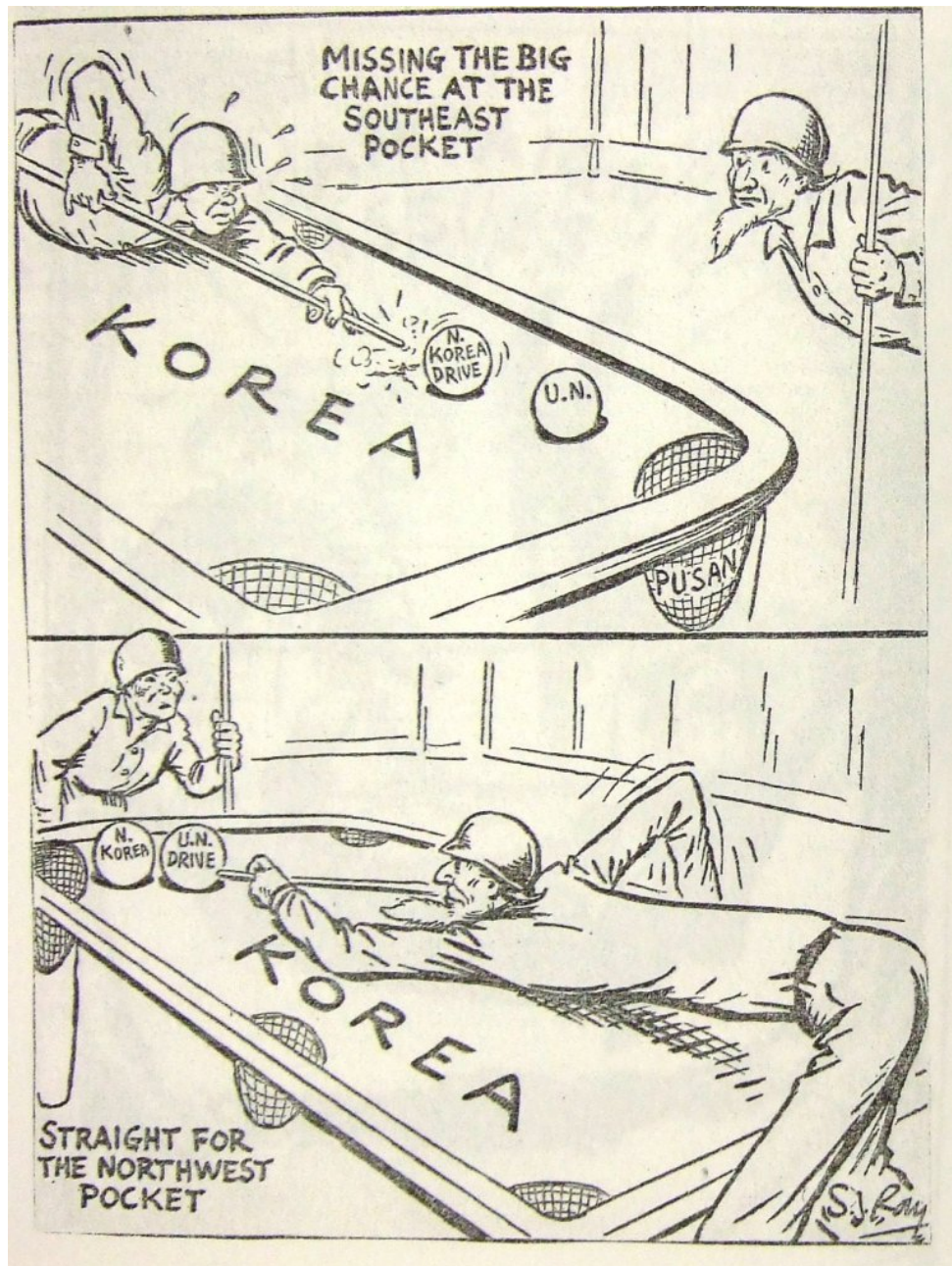
Picture 3:

"In the Driver's Seat"
Ithaca Journal
July 25, 1950



Picture 4:

"Now It's Our Shot"
Kansas City Star
October 18, 1950



Picture 5:

"The Third Man"
Saturday Evening Post
September 23, 1950



Chapter 4: War, Society, Legitimacy

Even the man who tries to rule with the help of mercenaries is dependent on their opinion and on the opinion of them held by the rest of the population. The truth is that no one rules with mercenaries. As Talleyrand said to Napoleon: “You can do everything with bayonets, Sire, except sit on them.” And ruling is not a matter of seizing power, but the tranquil exercise of it. In sum, to rule is to sit down, be it on a throne, curule chair, front bench, ministerial seat, or bishop’s cathedra. Contrary to the naive melodramatic view, ruling is not so much a question of a heavy hand as of a firm seat. The State is, in effect, the state of opinion. It is a position of equilibrium, a balance of pressures.¹

Jose Ortega Y Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses*

With the Truman administration’s final decision at the end of September 1950, American forces crossed the 38th Parallel northward on October 7, which quickly brought about the collapse of the Kim Il-sung regime in North Korea. Suddenly, a broad array of Korean anti-communist organizations returned to life in the northern part of Korea, and began retaliating against Kim’s supporters and sympathizers, revealing hidden conflicts that had been silenced under the Kim Il-sung regime.² Observing such a swift turn in the Korean situation, Chiang Kai-shek was exuberant in Taiwan, writing in his diary: “the U.S. forces’ crossing the 38th Parallel was the major turning point in East Asia.”³ That was so because the new situation in Korea suggested to him that a similar situation could occur in mainland China—once Taiwan’s counterattack began with the support of American forces, the Chinese people would rise up and the communist regime

¹ Jose Ortega Y Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses*, trans. Anthony Kerrigan (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985[1932]), 115.

² Park Myung-lim, *Sensō to Heiwa: Chōsen Hantō 1950* [War and Peace: The Korean Peninsula 1950] Yoshinobu Mori trans (Tōkyō: Shakai Hyōronsha, 2009), 241.

³ Chiang Kai-shek, October 14, 1950, Chiang Kai-shek Diaries (hereafter CKSD), Box 48, Hoover Institution Archives (hereafter HIA), Stanford University, Stanford, CA.

would fall. While almost resigned to Taiwan's fate a few months earlier, he had been rescued by this evolution in the Korean situation. Taiwan's economy stabilized, the people calmed down, and, finally, the Americans landed at Inchon and crossed the 38th Parallel, providing hope for a redrawing of the political map in East Asia. It is no wonder that Chiang Kai-shek wrote in his diary, "I feel to thank God."⁴

Another figure elated by the events of October 1950 was General Douglas MacArthur. On October 15, the general declared that the conflict was won, that the "Chinese Commies" would not attack, and that U.S. troops could be withdrawn from Korea by the end of the year.⁵ On the same day, even the *New York Times* devoted a great deal of space to two sensationalist articles: "Toward V-K Day" and "U.N.'s War in Korea Enters Its Last Phase, MacArthur's Forces Now in Position To Wipe Out Last Communist Units."⁶ Not only MacArthur, but many other believed that the war would be won. Confirming this belief, on October 19, American troops entered Pyongyang, and, on the next day, General MacArthur was on a tour from Tokyo, inspecting airborne landings at the front lines and visiting the newly gained northern capital, Pyongyang. According to United Press correspondent Earnest Hoberecht, who accompanied him on the tour, MacArthur jokingly asked General Walton H. Walker, who greeted him at the Pyongyang Airport, "Any celebrities here to greet me?" He scornfully added, "Where is Kim Buck Too?"⁷

⁴ Chiang Kai-shek, September 30, 1950, Box 48, CKSD, Hoover Institute, Stanford University, CA.

⁵ Arnold Offner, *Another Such Victory: President Truman and the Cold War, 1945-1953* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 391.

⁶ "Toward V-K Day," and "U.N.'s War in Korea Enter Its Last Phase, MacArthur's Forces Now in Position To Wipe Out Last Communist Units," *New York Times*, October 15, 1950.

⁷ "Makkasa zensen wo shisatsu; 'Kim-kun no demukae ha?' yumoa tappuri [MacArthur Inspects the

While MacArthur was optimistically dismissing the possibility of China's entry and ridiculing Kim Il-sung on October 20, however, the situation was already changing rapidly. In the early hours before dawn on that very day, roughly 120,000 Chinese officers and soldiers began crossing the Yalu River at the Chinese-North Korean border, and, within three days, a total of 260,000 had entered North Korean territory, marching to the south to redraw the picture of the war.⁸ In retrospect, MacArthur might appear to have been overly optimistic, but, at the time, his assessment seemed both rational and convincing. In fact, the majority of the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) leadership was opposed to China's entry, on the basis of military and economic capabilities, as well as mounting social and political problems at home. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) had neither an air force nor a navy able to confront U.S. forces, and the Chinese economy had not yet recovered from the devastation of World War II and the Civil War. In addition, the People's Republic of China (PRC) was just about a year old, and had yet to build a strong foundation. Looking at these situations, MacArthur's "common sense" was not necessarily invalid.

Yet, China entered the war in October 1950, and continued to pursue an aggressive strategy. By December 6, CPV armies had captured Pyongyang. Furthermore, while Beijing, in retrospect, could have terminated the war at the

Frontline; 'Where is Mr. Kim?' With Humor]," *Mainichi Shinbun*, October 21, 1950; Richard H. Rovere and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., *General MacArthur and President Truman: The Struggle for Control of American Foreign Policy* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1992 [1951]), 136; William Manchester, *American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur, 1880-1964* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1978), 599; William B. Breuer, *Shadow Warriors: The Covert War in Korea* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc, 1996), 106; and David Halberstam, *The Coldest Winter: America and the Korean War* (New York: Hyperion, 2007), 11.

⁸ Chen Jian, 205-209, 288; Allan R. Millet, Vol. 2, 297, 542.

end of 1950 by halting its troops at the 38th Parallel and declaring victory, it chose to continue the war. On the night of December 31, CPV forces crossed the 38th Parallel southward, seizing Seoul on January 4, 1951.⁹ The questions are: Why did China defy “common sense” and enter the Korean War with so many difficult problems at home? Why did Beijing continue to pursue an aggressive strategy, ignoring opportunities to terminate the war at an earlier stage?

These were questions frequently discussed. Scholars have presented, roughly divided, four answers, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive: ideology, security concerns, Soviet pressure, and Chinese leaders’ personalities and calculations.¹⁰ Thanks to the work of these scholars, we can now analyze

⁹ Wu Ruilin, *Kang Mei yuan Chao zhong de di 42 jun [The Forty-Second Army in the war of Resist America and Assist Korea]* (Beijing: Jincheng chubanshe, 1995). 80-81.

¹⁰ China's entry into the Korean War has been a topic for discussion for more than half a century. In the 1950s the Western media tended to describe an ideological tie between the USSR and China as a primary factor for China's entry into the war. In 1960, Allen Whiting argued that Beijing's concerns about physical security of the northeastern industrial border areas was the main factor, highlighting that the shift in the balance of power affected China's foreign policy. Whiting stressed the rationality of Beijing's decision, arguing that China entered the war because U.S. forces crossed the 38th parallel, despite Beijing's warning in early October 1950. See Allen Whiting, *China Crosses the Yalu: The Decision to Enter the Korean War* (New York: Macmillan, 1960), 108-15. This thesis has been widely shared, once nearly forming a consensus view. See, for instance, William Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995) and Simei Qing, *From Allies To Enemies: Visions of Modernity, Identity, and U.S.-China Diplomacy, 1945-1960* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 151-68. Quite a few Chinese authors and former military officials, likewise, have accepted this “China under threat” thesis since the outbreak of the Korean War. See, for instance, Pang Xianzhi and Li Jie, “Mao Zedong he kangmei yuanchao [Mao Zedong and the war of ‘Resist America and Assist Korea’],” *Dang de we xian* 2000 (4), 38; Zhang Xi, “Peng Dehuai Shouming Shuaishi Kangmei Yuanchao de Qianqian Houhou [Before and After Peng Dehuai's appointment to command the war of ‘Resist America and Assist Korea’],” *Zhonggong dangshi ziliao* 31 (October 1989): 111-59; Du Ping, *Zai zhiyuanjun zongbu [At the Headquarters in the Chinese People's Volunteers]* (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 1989); and Jiang Yonghui, *San shi ba jun zai Chaoxian [The Thirty-Eighth Army in Korea]* (Shenyang: Liaoning renmin chubanshe, 2009 [1996]).

While this thesis has certain merit in understanding a part of Beijing's strategic thinking, a question still remains; if Americans' action was the sole triggering factor, China's decision should have been made after U.S. forces crossed the 38th parallel, and Beijing should not have wavered on its stance after that. But, in fact, Beijing's decision was contemplated before the event, though it was reconsidered and overturned again and again until the CPV's actual crossing of the Yalu River.

To understand this puzzle, another group of historians have investigated Beijing's motivations since the 1990s. Drawing upon newly available Chinese documents, these scholars

China's policy during the Korean War from multiple angles. Nonetheless, most scholarly work has focused largely on power politics and the roles of top-ranking policymakers, while paying remarkably little attention to other significant

have found that China was not at all a passive, reactive actor, but rather the one that demonstrated proactive agency in entering the Korean War. Notably, Chen Jian, Shu Guang Zhang, and Shu Ken'ei [Zhu Jianrong] have focused on the Chinese leadership's characteristics, calculations, and ideology, based on Chinese society and culture. Chen Jian, for example, has challenged with the widely shared view that Beijing reacted to the U.S. forces' crossing of the 38th parallel. He argues that the CCP had been considering and preparing its intervention in the Korean War much earlier, highlighting Mao's own determination to maintain "the inner dynamics of the Chinese Revolution." See, for example, Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); Chen Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 49-84, and Chen Jian, "China's Changing Aims during the Korean War, 1950-1951," *The Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 1 (Spring 1992).

This line of argument, emphasizing Chinese leadership's domestic considerations, should be continued further. On this approach, see, for example, Shu Guang Zhang, *Mao's Romanticism: China and the Korean War, 1950-1953* (Lawrence: the University Press of Kansas, 1995); and Shu Ken'ei [Zhu Jianrong], *Mo Takuto no Chosen Senso: Chugoku ga Oryokuko wo wataru made [Mao Zedong's Korean War: China's Crossing of the Yalu River]* (Tokyo: Iwanami, 2004 [1991]). Thomas Christensen similarly accepts this "proactive China" interpretation, boldly stressing that Beijing utilized the international conflict to mobilize and control domestic politics. See Christensen, *Useful Adversaries: Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization, and Sino-American Conflict, 1947-1958* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 3-8, 157-66. Also, while not necessarily focusing on the Korean War issue, Maurice Meisner's *Mao's China and After: A History of the People's Republic*, 3rd ed. (New York: Free Press, 1999 [1986]) pays significant attention to a domestic politics and social dimension in connection with Beijing's policymaking.

The discussion of China's entry into the Korean War has been further complicated by another group of historians who use newly available Russian documents. Since the 1990s, they have underscored the importance of Joseph Stalin's pressure on Beijing. Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, for instance, have argued that "Mao seemed to have surrendered to Stalin's logic: he agreed to send nine divisions to fight in Korea." See Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996), 66-67. This Stalin-centric view matches well with the traditional American consensus, and it is no wonder that prominent American historians, like John Lewis Gaddis, have chosen to adopt this viewpoint. Gaddis, for example, emphasized "intense pressures from Stalin" as a decisive element in China's entry to the Korean War. See John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 77-81, and *The Cold War: A New History* (New York: Penguin Press, 2005), 42-46.

For the studies that have utilized Russian documents, see, for instance, Sergei Goncharov, John Lewis, and Xue Litai, *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), Alexandre Y. Mansourov, "Stalin, Mao, Kim, and China's Decision to Enter the Korean War, September 16-October 15, 1950," *CWIHP Bulletin* 6/7 (1995); Kathryn Weathersby, "'Should We Fear This?' Stalin and the Danger of the War with America," *CWIHP Working Paper* No.39 and "Soviet Aims in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War, 1945-50: New Evidence From the Russian Archives," *CWIHP Working Paper* No. 8.; and A.V. Torukunofu, *Chosen Senso no nazo to shinjitsu [The Myth and Truth of the Korean War]*, translation of Anatoliĭ Vasilevich Torkunov's *Zagadochnaia voĭna* by Shimotomai Nobuo and Kimu Sonho (Tokyo: Soshisha, 2001). Also, informative and thoughtful is Vojtech Mastny, *The Cold War and Soviet Insecurity: The Stalin Years* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

influences: in particular, domestic politics and popular attitudes, which constituted a social context that limited the range of choices available to Beijing. Such a domestic matrix provided social, cultural, and political contexts that made some decisions likely, and others less probable. Built on the existing literature's findings, this chapter expands the framework in answering the questions posed above with particular attention to everyday people's voices and behaviors, and connects the making of Beijing's policies to domestic politics, historical contexts, and daily lives of ordinary people.

After Inchon: Rumors and Fears

As discussed in the previous chapter, Beijing was not necessarily a major actor in the early stage of the Korean War; generally supporting the North Koreans but avoiding direct involvement. One major factor in Beijing's change of attitude was the American victory at the Inchon Landing on September 15, 1950.¹¹ As a matter of fact, hearing of the U.S. victory, Mao Zedong seemed to begin changing his mind on the China's stance in the war, writing to Gao Gang on that day, "It seems that not sending troops would be inappropriate, and that we need to prepare in earnest."¹² Yet, no consensus existed among the CCP leadership, and any decision to enter the war was yet to come. What became a critical factor for Beijing leaders' final decision was, rather, serious ramifications of the Inchon

¹¹ Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War*, 158-164.

¹² Yang Kuisong, *Mao Zedong yu Mosike di en en yuan yuan* (Mao Zedong's Indebtedness and Bitterness toward Moscow)(Nanchang, PRC: Jiangxi renmin chubanshe, 1999), 288.

Landing in Chinese society, as well as Beijing's observation of them, issues which have not been well understood in the existing literature.

To be sure, newspapers at that time rarely delivered reports that could be viewed as portraying the Communist Party in a negative light. As a matter of fact, the American victory at Inchon was reported several days later, and only in a small article, which described not "America's victory," but North Korean forces' "fierce defensive battle," in which the People's Army caused "serious damage" to American forces.¹³ Similarly, the North Korean forces' retreat from Seoul was described as a "planned withdrawal" and "victory."¹⁴ The amount of news on the war then sharply decreased in late September and October.¹⁵ It might appear strange, thus, to think about "ramifications" of the Inchon Landing in Chinese society. One might ask: "How could the operation have had an impact on the public without much information?"

Yet, the fact that newspapers stopped reporting on the war situation provided enough of a sign to let readers sense the change of tide in the war. "Editors of newspapers must have racked their brains to figure out how to say People's Army's 'victory' to describe their retreat from Seoul!" sarcastically said one traffic policeman in Beijing.¹⁶ Another policeman, Li Guozhong, was even more

¹³ *Renmin Ribao*, September 23, 1950.

¹⁴ "zhongnan qu qingnian qunzhong de sixiang qingkuang [The thought situations among a mass of youth in Zhongnan area]," *Neibu cankao*, October 31, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

¹⁵ "Diwu quwei, Qu fulian chouweihui deng danwei guanyu Kang-Mei Yuan-Chao gongzuo de baogao, zhoubao, jianbao [Reports and summaries of the fifth district committee and women's league of the district etc. concerning the work of the Resisting America and Assisting Korea campaigns]," October 20, 1950, No. 040-002-00123, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

¹⁶ "Beijing-shi diliu quwei ge zhibu youguan Kang Mei Yuan Chao de qunzhong fanying ji xuanchuan zhihuizhan gongzuo jihua [Reports from various branch offices of the sixth district in Beijing concerning the common people's reactions in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea

critical: “Newspapers report how many Americans died, and how many Yi Sung-man soldiers died. But did no one die on the Korean [People’s Army] side? The news is nothing but propaganda.”¹⁷ Another internal report similarly informed Beijing that many people no longer trusted *Renmin Ribao*, viewing it as reporting only good news for the Communist Party, as Nationalist Party’s paper did for it.¹⁸ The internal report, thus, concluded, “After Inchon, a sense of disappointment is spreading.”¹⁹

In contrast to the marked decline in the quantity of war news, what increased rapidly following the Inchon Landing were rumors, from the verisimilar and credible to the wild and fantastical. “America is not a ‘paper tiger;’ it is an ‘iron tiger!’” “North Koreans can do nothing about it,” maintained whispers in Shanghai and other neighboring cities.²⁰ Another typical story involved the fate of Kim Il-sung; one rumor in Beijing had it that Kim was already captured and taken prisoner, and another that Kim had evacuated to Beijing, or possibly Moscow.²¹ The change of tide in Korea increased concerns about its neighboring region, the

movements and working plans for propaganda],” November, 1950, No. 038-001-00023, Beijing Municipal Archives (hereafter BMA), Beijing, PRC.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ “Zhongnan qu qingnian qunzhong de sixiang qingkuang [The thought situations among a mass of youth in Zhongnan area],” *Neibu cankao*, October 31, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ “1951 nian bannian lai jinxing kang-Mei yuan-Chao aiguo zhuyi jiaoyu de qingkuang baogao [Situation report concerning the ongoing patriotism education of Resisting America and Assisting Korea in the first half of 1951],” September 21, 1951, C21-1-108, SMA, Shanghai, PRC; “Wuxi, Suzhou dengdi liuchuan de yaoyan ji bufen ganbu qunzhong dui shiju de fanying [The spread of rumors in Wuxi and Suzhou etc. and reactions among some cadres and the common people toward the current political situation],” November 11, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

²¹ Ibid; “Beijing-shi diliu quwei ge zhibu youguan Kang Mei Yuan Chao de qunzhong fanying ji xuanchuan zhihuizhan gongzuo jihua [Reports from various branch offices of the sixth district in Beijing concerning the common people’s reactions in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements and working plans for propaganda],” October 19, 1950, No. 038-001-00023, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

northeast of China; one student at Youzhen Junior School in Beijing, Ma Lilan, heard that all schools in Shenyang had moved to Harbin. Another student, who had been accepted to a university in the northeast, gave up going to the school because his family feared the outbreak of a war in the north.²²

Such imaginings about the prospect of war were not limited to the northeast region. “American airplanes are attacking the northeast. What should we do if they come to Beijing?” “The United States must use an atomic bomb in Shanghai,” maintained rumors in Beijing and Shanghai, respectively.²³ With these rumors and fears, again, commodity prices increased in many cities, and, similarly, the price of gold jumped. In the city of Wuxi in the Jiangsu Province, for instance, gold prices increased by 125 percent in only four days following September 18.²⁴ Rumors and fears of these kinds often ignited another concern—the recurrence of Civil War, that is, the Nationalist Party’s counteroffensive.

Whispers maintained, for example, “The Nationalist Party already began landing at Guangdong and Dalian;” “GMD armies of two million strength have been

²² “Diwu quwei, Qu fulian chouweihui deng danwei guanyu Kang-Mei Yuan-Chao gongzuo de baogao, zhoubao, jianbao [Reports and summaries of the fifth district committee and women’s league of the district etc. concerning the work of the Resisting America and Assisting Korea campaigns],” October 20, 1950, No. 040-002-00123, BMA, Beijing, PRC; “Kang Mei Yuan Chao yundong zhong zhongxuesheng de sixiang zhuangkuang [The situation of thought among high school students in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements],” September 21, 1950, No. 100-001-00034, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

²³ “Beijing-shi diliu quwei ge zhibu youguan Kang Mei Yuan Chao de qunzhong fanying ji xuanchuan zhihuizhan gongzuo jihua [Reports from various branch offices of the sixth district in Beijing concerning the common people’s reactions in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements and working plans for propaganda],” November, 1950, No. 038-001-00023, BMA, Beijing, PRC; “1951 nian bannian lai jinxing kang-Mei yuan-Chao aiguo zhuyi jiaoyu de qingkuang baogao [Situation report concerning the ongoing patriotism education of Resisting America and Assisting Korea in the first half of 1951],” September 21, 1951, C21-1-108, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.

²⁴ “Mei-jun zai Renchuan denglu hou, Wuxi gongshang jie sixiang hunluan huangjin pengzhang [The inflation in gold price and the confusion among the business circles in Wuxi following the landing of U.S. forces at Inchon]” *Neibu cankao*, October 13, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

heading for Changsha.” Another story even claimed, “Lin Biao was already dead in an air raid on August 8th, and his coffin had already arrived at Changsha.”²⁵ In such whispers, even the weather provided a reasoning for the fate of the Communist Party; one rumor maintained that World War III had just begun, and that the people now working for the CCP would be killed soon, adding that “When Japanese armies came here we had a long spell of dry weather, and the Japanese were routed within a year. Now the communist armies have come and we have a long drought, too. They will not be here so long, either.”²⁶

With the American forces’ landing at Inchon and North Korean army’s setbacks, and with rumors of the GMD’s counteroffensive on the mainland, came a sea change in popular attitudes. According to internal reports, some local, village-level cadres became half-hearted, some who had claimed interest in registering with the Communist Party suddenly evaded commitment, some members of the Youth League began planning to withdraw or already withdrawn their names from membership, and some peasants became reluctant to provide provisions.²⁷ Such half-heartedness was quite common at that moment. A staff member of the Police Department in Beijing, Liu Baomin, too, even though publicly advocating his

²⁵ “Hunan, Zhejiang, Sunan, Shandong dengdi yaoyan huiji [The collection of rumors in Hunan, Zhejiang, Sunan, and Shandong etc.],” *Neibu cankao*, October 25, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ “Zhonggong Shanghai shi jiaoqu gongzuo weiyuanhui xuanchuan bu guanyu jiaoqu Kang-Mei Yuan-Chao xuanchuan jiaoyu gongzuo qingkuang de baogao [The report concerning operations of propaganda and education on the Resisting America and Assisting Korea in the outskirts of Shanghai],” A71-2-889-10, January 5, 1951, SMA, Shanghai, PRC; “Kang-Mei Yuan-Chao yundong zhong zhongxuesheng de sixiang zhuangkuang [The situation of thought among high school students in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements],” November, 1950, No. 100-001-00034, BMA, Beijing, PRC; and “Beijing-shi diliu quwei ge zhibu youguan Kang Mei Yuan Chao de qunzhong fanying ji xuanchuan zhihuizhan gongzuo jihua [Reports from various branch offices of the sixth district in Beijing concerning the common people’s reactions in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements and working plans for propaganda],” November 2, 1950, No. 038-001-00023, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

“determined support” for the stance of the Beijing Government, reportedly purchased a tricycle after the Inchon Landing in secret, preparing to flee Beijing in case of the outbreak of World War III.²⁸

Such an attitude was a sort of self-protection on the side of ordinary people in a time of uncertainty and unrest, and not at all unreasonable in view of increasingly deteriorating social order. In fact, anti-communist and insurrectionary activities became more and more common after the United States entered in the Korean War, particularly in the weeks following the American victory at Inchon. Various kinds of “counterrevolutionaries,” for instance, attacked factories and railways, set fire to warehouses and private houses, and even organized riots and battles against local communist governments.²⁹ Reactionary slogans were ubiquitous; graffiti in a public convenience at the Beihai Park in Beijing read, for example, “Defeat Mao Zedong!” “Mao Zedong is the head of rebels,” and so on. Similar slogans appeared even in front of army camps.³⁰

Such rumors and doubts about the CCP’s legitimacy were partly due to the fact that, in some remote areas, local communist governments had difficulties in managing—or even lost control over—local “rebels.” A local official in the Zhejiang Province, south of Shanghai, for example, informed Beijing at the end of September 1950:

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ See news articles appeared in, for instance, *Chiangjiang Ribao* (25 July 1950, 8 October, 5 November, and 24 November); *Jilin Ribao* (26 October, 28 October, 1 November, and 5 November); *Henan Ribao* (14 November and 23 November); *Shanxi Ribao* (6 August, 8 September, 21 October, and 4 December); *Guangxi Ribao* (10 December and 17 December); and *Renmin Ribao* (17 October). These newspapers are available at Jilin University Library Archives (hereafter JULA), Changchun, PRC.

³⁰ Jiang Yonghui, 14. Jiang Yonghui was an adjutant commander in the CPV during the Korean War.

In August, military achievements against rebels were not so large, and our attack on them was not strong enough, giving them opportunities to take advantage of. The activities of rebels have now tended to become rampant [...]. They spread rumors, deceive people, frighten people, and kidnap people. They send foodstuffs and money to people as they wish, and, at the same time, conduct looting, thus destroying and damaging to our organization in villages. They assassinate our active supporters in villages, block traffic, and destroy electric cables, thus disturbing order in villages.³¹

Such a situation was not limited to this area in the eastern part of China. Another report, from the Hubei Province in the central area, similarly described activities of local “rebels,” which became rampant particularly in the late summer of 1950. These activities included, for example, dozens of robberies every month, destruction of crops, demolition of traffic routes and electric cables, and so on.³² Likewise, a report from the Hunan Province detailed the activities of counterrevolutionary groups, such as the “Chinese Self-Rescuing Army” in the area.³³ It was said that, in the western part of the province, where around 300,000 people lived, there were more than “70,000 rebels.” A far more remote corner, the Guizhou Province, might have been the most troubling from Beijing’s perspective, since eighty percent of the province had been captured by local “rebels.”³⁴

CCP leaders were acutely aware of widespread unrest. They noted the chain of association between counterrevolutionary activities and America’s intervention in the Korean War. After America’s direct intervention in Korea and

³¹ “Zhejiang liu fenqu feite huadong jianqu changjue [The activities of bandits and spies became rampant in the sixth district of Zhejiang],” *Neibu cankao*, October 13, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

³² “Hubei tufei tewu eba huadong zhuangkuang [The situations of activities of local bandits, spies, and local despots in Hubei],” *Neibu cankao*, October 14, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

³³ “Xiangxi Wugang, Chengbu deng xian feite huadong zhuangkuang [The situations of activities of bandits and spies in Xiangxi Wugang, Chengbu etc.],” *Neibu cankao*, October 19, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

³⁴ Shu Ken’ei [Zhu Jianrong], *Mo Takuto no Chosen Senso: Chugoku ga Oryokuko wo wataru made* [Mao Zedong’s Korean War: China’s Crossing of the Yalu River] (Tokyo: Iwanami Gendai Bunko, 2004), 382-3.

its dispatch of the Seventh Fleet to the Taiwan Strait, Beijing was haunted by fear for the survival of its new government. This fear was caused by the prospect of counterrevolutionary pressures from within and without, and not groundless at all, particularly in view of the continuing Civil War.³⁵

Legitimacy Still Unsettled: Continuing Civil War

As a matter of fact, at the time of the establishment of the People's Republic of China, one third of Chinese territory was not yet under CCP control. In addition to Hainan Island, Tibet, and Taiwan, all or most parts of Guangdong, Guangxi, Sichuan, Guizhou, and Yunnan, as well as portions of Shanxi, Hunan, and Hubei were not yet "liberated." By the time of the outbreak of the Korean War, most of these regions had come under control, yet Tibet and Taiwan remained thorns in the CCP's side. In addition to this, even in "liberated" areas, resistance remained powerful. In Guangxi province, for example, the local communist party announced that more than "7,000 people" were killed by reactionaries in 1950.³⁶ At a glance, this number may seem high, but, in response, the local liberation army suppressed "143,000 rebels" the same year.³⁷ More specifically, in only five days in early December 1950, about "4,560 reactionaries" were reportedly killed.³⁸

The large-scale purge in Guangxi province in 1950 was not an independent event. According to a speech by Zhou Enlai, the People's Liberation Army (PLA)

³⁵ Meisner, 71.

³⁶ Hu Sheng et al., *Zhongguo gongchandang de qishinian [A Seventy-years History of the Chinese Communist Party]* (Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, 1991), 328.

³⁷ *Guangxi Ribao*, 10 December 1950, JULA, Changchun, PRC.

³⁸ *Guangxi Ribao*, 17 December 1950, JULA, Changchun, PRC.

had eliminated about “8,070,000 enemies” since 1946, and in one year between 1949 and 1950, “2,180,000 reactionaries” were killed.³⁹ These massive numbers that the CCP announced may have been exaggerated in order to impress their audience, but, even so, the essence of the problem—the existence of social unrest—was certain. These numbers indicate not only the strength of CCP rule, but also suggest the existence of a deep-rooted disavowal of the legitimacy of the communist regime.

After Inchon, in particular, a prospect of counterrevolution wore the aura of “reality” as the Nationalist Party heightened its propaganda campaigns in central and southern China in the weeks following the American victory at the Inchon Landing. On September 26, for instance, the GMD’s ten airplanes flew over coastal and central areas, such as the Hubei, Hunan, Anhui, Jiangxi, Zhejiang, Fujian, and Guangdong provinces, dropping bags containing white rice, books, and leaflets. A letter to “fellow countrymen who suffer from famine” told readers that North Korean forces had been defeated already, and that the Nationalist Party has been preparing for a counterattack, adding, “Our fellow countrymen in the mainland! Stood up, and support GMD’s counteroffensive!”⁴⁰

In such a situation, the CCP in the fall of 1950 was still far from establishing authority and credibility in the hearts of the people. Recurring counterrevolutionary activities and the continuing Civil War, thus, were not just a

³⁹ Zhou Enlai, *Zhou Enlai junshi wenxuan [Zhou Enlai’s Collected Works on Military Affairs]*, 30 September 1950 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1997), 60-61.

⁴⁰ “Kongjun yuanfei dalu kongtou baimi [Air force flew far to the mainland to drop white rice],” *Minsheng Ribao*, September 27, 1950, National Taiwan University, Taipei, Taiwan; *Neibu cankao*, November 9, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

military issue, but, at core, a political issue, which could have fundamental and negative ramifications for other domestic programs—at the core of the CCP’s legitimacy—such as land reform.

In fact, for the Communist Party, land reform was not really “agrarian” reform, but, rather, a political campaign, because its aim was the destruction of the political power of the gentry-landlord class and the establishment of new legitimacy in thousands of villages throughout China. In the countryside, where probably more than 70 percent of the population of 500 million was comprised of poor peasants, the real heart of agrarian reform was to build a sense of trust toward the CCP.

Yet, problems in the land reform program had been escalating since the spring of 1950, reaching critical mass in the fall of 1950. An internal report written in November of 1950 summarized the situation well:

After the American intervention in Korea, landlords and rich-peasants appeared to be planning mischief, and, particularly after this fall, there have been more than a hundred cases of various kinds of reactionary activities. In particular, in the areas of Shangdu and Kangbao, there were more than fifty such cases. For example, some landlords threatened peasants and recaptured their land, and others seized their crops. In other cases, they ejected peasants through threatening or starting rumors, saying, for instance, “World War III has started. The land [allocated to peasants] will be back to original owners.” Peasants are afraid of a change of the government. There is a case in which landlords merged with local gangs, killing communist cadres and active peasants. Such landlords’ counterattack has attracted the attention of the local communist government, which has decided to suppress these actions. Many cases of intense conflicts between peasants and landlords are emerging everywhere.⁴¹

Looking closely, however, one notes that conflicts of this kind were much more persistent and deep-rooted than this report described. In fact, these were

⁴¹ “Meidi qinChao hou, Chasheng gedi dizhu jinxing fangong [After the U.S. intervention in Korea, landlords in various places in the Cha province carry on counterattack],” November 30, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

problems, which had existed and were being exacerbated, and which only came to surface, particularly after America's entry into the war and its landing at Inchon.

The crux of the problem, actually, was the CCP's initial moderate stance in terms of land reform, which was adopted in the early months of the PRC but discarded in the fall of 1950. As a matter of fact, in initiating the spread of land reform in the spring of 1950, the Communist Party took a much more cautious and moderate policy. It promised that land reform would be conducted in "an orderly manner through a step-by-step process."⁴² Radicalism was avoided, and less revolutionary policies—such as preservation of rich peasants—were chosen. Such a milder and gradualist course was taken to make it possible to sustain production levels and to avoid social and economic disorder. At the same time, such policies could lend the continuation of "reactionary" forces, keeping the life of peasants as it was.⁴³ In short, moderate policy could have economic benefits, but have negative effects, politically.

In fact, *Xin Hunan Bao*, a local newspaper in the Hunan province, received questions and doubts from readers regarding such land reform in the early months of the PRC: "Is this policy not contradictory to a previous one that aimed at eradicating the land-owning class?" "How could peasants live without confiscating lands of rich-peasants?" "How was the previous land reform policy changed as such?" "What kind of attitude should we take toward former landlords?"⁴⁴ Lower-

⁴² Amako Satoshi, *Chuka jinmin kyowakoku shi* [A History of the People's Republic of China] (Tokyo, 1999), 21.

⁴³ "Jiangsu Zhenjiang shi gejie dui tudi fa...de fanying [The reactions toward the Land Reform Law in the various circles of the city of Zhenjiang in Jiangsu]," *Neibu Cankao*, July 18, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

⁴⁴ "Dui 'budong funong tudi caichan' kouhao de yiwen [The questions toward slongans of 'Not

ranking officials in villages expressed puzzlement, as well. "The policy of protecting prosperous farmers cannot satisfy peasants' demands, and land reform would be rendered meaningless." Fearful of the decline in peasants' spirits, some cadres intentionally did not convey this policy in the spring of 1950, and others even deliberately misrepresented the content of recent land reform policies in their attempts at winning peasants' hearts.⁴⁵ It was no wonder that the Communist Party had so little success in collecting taxes and foodstuffs; in the southwestern region, the party collected only eleven percent of expected taxes and forty percent of expected foodstuffs. The main causes for this difficulty reportedly came from the resistance of the land-owning classes.⁴⁶

Much worse than the tax problem was that land reform was an issue at the very basis of the credibility of the regime. In fact, landowners made desperate efforts to survive the revolution. Some provided feasts for peasants, some repurchased land and farming equipment from peasants, and others threatened peasants by saying, for instance, that the Nationalist Party had already returned to the mainland, and that the communist rule would not last very long.⁴⁷ In the south, where clan organizations were strong and local communist parties relatively weak,

taking lands and propaties from rich-peasants']," *Neibu Cankao*, June 8, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

⁴⁵ "Hebei, Pingyuan ge jiecheng dui budong funong zhengce de fanying [The reactions among various levels in society in Hebei Pingyuan toward the policy of preserving rich peasants]," *Neibu Cankao*, July 10, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

⁴⁶ "The central tasks among immediate operations: the summary of Deng Xiaoping's report in the Southwest newspaper conference," *Neibu Cankao*, May 23, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

⁴⁷ "Xuanchang...dizhu qianfang baiji dikang pohuai [Landlords in Xuanchang making every possible effort to resist and destroy]," *Neibu Cankao*, May 16, 1950; *Neibu Cankao*, July 19, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

the gentry used kinship ties to protect themselves.⁴⁸ In many of these southern regions, Communist Party officials were considered “outsiders,” who had come abruptly from the “north,” and had little knowledge of local situations, often not even speaking the native dialect, and thus often provoking resentment from natives.⁴⁹

In these areas, the CCP had not yet achieved social control on the local level, and thus local residents often chose to follow “local rules” of indigenous gangs and “bandits” who had been dominant on the local scene for a long time, because they feared these local forces more than the Communist Party. As Frederick C. Teiwes points out, ordinary peasants still had little confidence about whether CCP rule would be irreversible or not.⁵⁰ In rural areas of Hunan, for instance, local residents avoided talking to communist officials publicly for fear of revenge by local “bandits.” Local residents reportedly said, “The government would release bandits just two or three months after they arrested them. What can we say?”⁵¹ “I do not fear the Heaven or Earth, but I am only afraid of the People’s government being too tolerant.”⁵²

Such doubts and fears gained the ring of truth as American forces landed at Inchon and advanced to the north. According to an internal report, “unlawful”

⁴⁸ Meisner, 92-96.

⁴⁹ Frederick C. Teiwes, “Establishing and Consolidating of the New Regime,” 84; Also, see, Ezra Vogel, *Canton Under Communism: Programs and Politics in a Provincial Capital, 1949-1968* (New York, 1971 [1969]), 91-106.

⁵⁰ Frederick C. Teiwes, “Establishing and Consolidating of the New Regime,” 85.

⁵¹ “Linli dui guanfei chuli bu qiadang jishi tufei chengji zaoyao qunzhong kongju [The dealings of bandits not appropriate in Linli, local bandits seizing the opportunity without delay and spreading rumors, and the masses terrified],” *Neibu Cankao*, May 15, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

⁵² Xiangxi Wugang, Chengbu deng xian feite huadong zhuangkuang [The situations of activities of bandits and spies in Xiangxi Wugang, Chengbu etc.], *Neibu cankao*, October 19, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

landowners resumed making their presence felt in rural communities, often bringing together variety of anti-communist forces to form armed resistance organizations.⁵³ Peasant leaders became less enthusiastic, village cadres became reluctant to conduct programs, and peasants did not dare to attend meetings. In fact, one locals' meeting in Shanghai that was supposed to have more than twenty participants only had ten.⁵⁴ Fearing the return of the Nationalist Party, by that time, some peasants refused to receive lands and houses allocated to them. "Landlords will make a counterattack. Our boss cannot be reliable," one peasant on the outskirts of Wuxi said. At this point, an elementary school teacher's comment appeared "realistic": "Peasants cannot do anything well for ever and ever. If they want to do something, they must rely on landlords."⁵⁵

Popular images of America and landowning classes were mixed because America was viewed as backing Chiang Kai-shek [Jiang Jieshi] and, by extension, the landowning class in China. Even though landowners in rural China had nothing to do with U.S. intervention in Korea, images of American capitalism, combined with hostility, connected them in a symbolic sense. If Beijing did not take an aggressive attitude towards the United States in Korea, how could local party members logically convince peasants to confront landowners at home? How could peasants believe in the CCP's land reform program if Beijing was soft on landlords

⁵³ "Hunan Yongshun dengdi tufei huadong zhuangkuang [The situation of activities of local bandits in Hunan Yongshun etc]," *Neibu Cankao*, June 22, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC. Jiang Yonghui, *San shi ba jun zai Chaoxian [The Thirty-Eighth Army in Korea]* (Shenyang: Liaoning renmin chubanshe, 1996), 14. Jiang Yonghui was an adjutant commander in the CPV during the Korean War.

⁵⁴ "Zhonggong Shanghaishi jiaoqu gongzuo weiyuanhui guanyu Shanghaishi Hualongqu heping qianming yundong de gongzuo jianbao [CCP rural workings committee on peace signature campaigns at Hualong district in Shanghai]," November 4, 1950, A71-2-56, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

and “*Meidi* [American imperialism],” which was supposed to be backing landlords in China? In this way, domestic and foreign issues were seen to be connected, and American involvement became to be an undesirable factor for CCP supporters, which could cause the de-stabilization of domestic order and erosion of confidence among the people.⁵⁶

Viewed in this way, it is no wonder, thus, that some of those who had been enthusiastic and supportive toward the Communist Party grew impatient with the CCP’s cautious stance at home and abroad. In early September, for instance, a local committee in Zhenjiang, eastern China, was informed that some people said, “Why don’t we go and fight? What is the point of just issuing protests in writing?”⁵⁷ A local committee in Beijing received similar letters: “The American army invades Korea in full strength. That’s too much for the Korean people. Why doesn’t our Democratic side send troops?” “*Meidi* [American imperialism] has already come over our head.” “American imperialists openly invade [Korea], why don’t we support Korea in open ways?”⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Wang Bo, *Mao Zedong de jiannan juece: Zhongguo renmin zhiyuanjun chubing Chaoxian de juece guocheng* [Mao Zedong’s Difficult Decision: A Process of Decision making over the Dispatch of the Chinese People’s Volunteers to Korea], 2nd ed (Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2006), 129.

⁵⁷ “Mei-ji qinfan wo dongbei lingkong hou Zhenjiang qunzhong fanying [The masses’ reactions in Zhenjiang following the American combat planes’ violation of our northeastern territorial sky],” *Neibu cankao*, September 12, 1950.

⁵⁸ “Opinions regarding the progress of the war,” a memo from Beijing municipal committee to the Central Committee, 8 October 1950, in Beijing shi dangan guan yanjiushi ed., “Beijing shi yu Kan-Mei yuan-Chao [City of Beijing and ‘Resist America and Assist Korea’ movements],” *Lengzhan guojishi yanjiu* [Cold War International History Studies], vol. 2 (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 2006), 396; “Beijing-shi diliu quwei ge zhibu youguan Kang Mei Yuan Chao de qunzhong fanying ji xuanchuan zhihuizhan gongzuo jihua [Reports from various branch offices of the sixth district in Beijing concerning the common people’s reactions in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements and working plans for propaganda],” November 2, 1950, No. 038-001-00023, BMA, Beijing, PRC; “Zhongnan qu qingnian qunzhong de sixiang zhuangkuang [The thought situations of the youth in the Zhongnan region],” *Neibu cankao*, October 31 and November 3, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

It is important to note, however, that such an aggressive stance remained only one of several viewpoints, and did not represent a majority.⁵⁹ According to local cadres' observations in Beijing, many expressed reluctance toward the idea of entering the war. Some said, "To be sure, it is a good thing to send troops to Korea, but it would be difficult to do so because many people now dislike any war, many don't have hatred toward the United States, and thus morale is very low." Likewise, one low-ranking party member said, "China has just come out from the horrors of war. We need enough rest and preparation."⁶⁰

In addition to this, some intellectuals, businessmen, and college students simply remained sympathetic to the United States. "I simply don't feel hatred toward the United States," one female student at Yanjing University in Beijing said.⁶¹ Another high school student in the northeastern city of Jilin asked, "What's wrong with the U.S.? I love to have American bread and milk."⁶² A similar opinion came up in a discussion class at a junior school in Beijing; one student voiced his opinion, "Americans are good. They came to help us before. Giving us foodstuffs can be called an 'economic invasion,' but not a 'political invasion,'" and further

⁵⁹ A similar observation can be seen in, for instance, Hou Songtao, "Kan-Mei yuan-Chao yundong zhong de shehui dongyuan" [The Social Mobilization in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea Movements], PhD. Dissertation, Zhonggong zhongyao dangxiao, 2006, 29.

⁶⁰ "Beijing-shi diliu quwei ge zhibu youguan Kang Mei Yuan Chao de qunzhong fanying ji xuanchuan zhihuizhan gongzuo jihua [Reports from various branch offices of the sixth district in Beijing concerning the common people's reactions in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements and working plans for propaganda]," November, 1950, No. 038-001-00023, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

⁶¹ Beijing shi dangan guan yanjiushi ed., "Report on 'Resist America and Assist Korea' campaign," a memo from Beijing municipal committee to the Central Committee, 5 November 1950, in *Lengzhan guojishi yanjiu* [Cold War International History Studies], 397-8.

⁶² "How one student realized 'American Imperialist,'" *Jilin Ribao*, 10 November 1950.

inquired, "If this is an invasion, why do not we think the support from the Soviet Union an invasion?"⁶³

Still, there was another kind of attitude that was common and widespread at that time: apathy. "It's not my business whether we go to war or not. I just do my job. That's it," said one policeman in Beijing in late August of 1950.⁶⁴ A similar view was observed everywhere; a local committee in Nanjing observed that some people were saying: "'Opposing America' is just something Mao Zedong is doing. If we can just continue to eat, for us, whatever would be fine. If Americans would come, it's just all right, too."⁶⁵ In Shanghai, as well, a significant number of students were saying, "Who cares?"⁶⁶ From the perspective of many ordinary people it mattered little. Such an attitude appeared in a voice of a Shanghai factory worker:

Today, Taiwan is conducting their land reform, and Chiang Kai-shek has also begun criticizing himself. They now understand that they need to serve the general public and people. Why should we attack them now? Isn't it impossible for Mao Zedong and Chiang Kai-shek to issue a joint statement that neither is going to participate in World War III? We common people just need to eat and survive. We don't need to say, 'You are a supporter of Mao!' or 'You are a supporter of Chiang!' Who cares?⁶⁷

⁶³ "Beijing-shi diliu quwei ge zhibu youguan Kang Mei Yuan Chao de qunzhong fanying ji xuanchuan zhihuizhan gongzuo jihua [Reports from various branch offices of the sixth district in Beijing concerning the common people's reactions in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements and working plans for propaganda]," November, 1950, No. 038-001-00023, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ "Nanjing ge jieceng dui shiju he tugai de fanying ji gongshang jie de sixiang dongtai [The reactions on various levels of society in Nanjing toward current affairs and land reform, as well as the general trends of thoughts in the business circles]," *Neibu cankao*, August 30, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

⁶⁶ "Zhonggong Shanghai shi Changshu quwei xuanchuanbu guanyu ge jieceng qunzhong yundong sixiang dongtai baogao [Report written by the propaganda division of the Changshu district in the CCP Shanghai Committee concerning thought trends among various sectors of the common people]," November 9, 1950, No. A22-2-20-94, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.

⁶⁷ "Shanghai, Tianjin deng di yao yan yisu [A number of rumors in Shanghai and Tianjin etc.]," November 7, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

From the perspective of the Communist Party, however, such a lack of interest was, in a sense, most threatening because it could undermine the *cause* of the communist revolution and government. In other words, this issue was the reason for their existence. Such elements of indifference could be dangerous because people could easily switch positions depending on the course of current events.

This is why the communist leadership paid significant attention to currents of popular attitudes. The municipal committee in Beijing, for example, studied public reactions concerning China's stance on the Korean War, classifying people in four categories: those who urged Beijing to enter the war, those who opposed entering the war on the basis of China's incapability, those who opposed entering on the basis of the lack of a just cause, and those who did not find any fault on the American side.⁶⁸

A similar investigation was conducted with a portion of the People's Liberation Army in August of 1950. This study focused on soldiers' attitudes toward the United States, placing them into three categories: fifty percent had strong anti-American sentiments and firm confidence in communist programs; another forty percent understood the CCP's programs and the meaning of the war but remained less confident; and the remaining ten percent experiencing tendencies toward "fearing America," "admiring America" or "sympathizing with America." This last ten percent, reportedly mostly youth from newly "liberated"

⁶⁸ "Beijing-shi diliu quwei ge zhibu youguan Kang Mei Yuan Chao de qunzhong fanying ji xuanchuan zhihuizhan gongzuo jihua [Reports from various branch offices of the sixth district in Beijing concerning the common people's reactions in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements and working plans for propaganda]," November, 1950, No. 038-001-00023, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

areas, lacked confidence in the CCP programs.⁶⁹ While we cannot gauge the reliability, it suggests that nearly half still remained more or less dubious, though the majority had confidence in the CCP's programs. What is interesting is not so much the accuracy of this ratio as the fact that communist authorities paid attention to popular attitudes.

In fact, policymakers in Beijing were attentive to the balance among these categories: the majority that made up of supportive elements; another large portion sitting on the fence; and a small portion remaining dubious toward the communist cause. Because of the supportive majority, the CCP would be able to conduct its programs at home. Yet, the discontented faction remained, and the large portion of politically moderate elements could easily falter depending on the progress of circumstances, particularly in wartime.

Although Beijing remained relatively cautious toward the Korean War and America's involvement throughout the summer of 1950, the complexity of popular attitudes created a difficult situation: if Beijing chose not to confront the United States abroad, the majority of supportive elements could become reluctant or lose confidence in CCP programs, while at the same time the undesirable elements in society could rise up, possibly disturbing CCP legitimacy at home. During the early stage of the Korean War, thus, the communist leadership had to deal with foreign and domestic issues in conjunction. This was because achieving one goal could possibly promote other goals, while failing to attain one could have a harmful influence on other tasks, whether abroad or at home. Such a consideration

⁶⁹ Du Ping, *Zai zhiyuanjun zongbu [At the Headquarters in the Chinese People's Volunteers]* (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 1989), 24.

weighed heavily when Beijing faced the question of whether or not China would enter the Korean War in early October of 1950.

China's Entry into the Korean War

On October 1, 1950, the People's Republic of China celebrated its first anniversary. Newspapers printed pictures of Mao Zedong and Sun Wen side-by-side, and carried articles and letters extoling the achievements of the "people's victory." In Beijing, Tiananmen Square was filled with thousands of people all day long; the review of the troops began in the morning, followed by waves of demonstrations and parades in the afternoon, which Mao Zedong and other CCP leaders observed from the top of the Tiananmen Gate. Similar events were held all over the country, and tens of thousands of people participated in various events celebrating the first anniversary of the new government (Picture 1).

Mao Zedong, however, might not have been in a mood to celebrate, as he had just received two urgent messages on that day, one from Kim Il-sung, and the other from Joseph Stalin, both soliciting Beijing to enter the war in Korea in support of North Korea. The situation in Korea was grave. North Korean armies were on the verge of annihilation, and the Kim Il-sung regime was facing imminent collapse. Worse still, Beijing had received an intelligence report, indicating the U.S. forces' crossing of the 38th Parallel, though, in retrospect, it was a misreport.⁷⁰

Having received these letters and information, Mao held an urgent meeting on that

⁷⁰ Shu Guang Zhang, *Mao's Romanticism*, 77; UK4B-31-11, Telegram, CRO to High Commissioner in Dehli, October 3, 1950, in DO133/24 "China: Political Situation," BNA, Kew, U.K. This information was turned out as a false report. The forces that crossed the 38th Parallel on October 1 was South Korean armies. U.S. forces crossed the parallel on October 8 local time.

evening with Zhu De, Liu Shaoqi, and Zhou Enlai, in which he insisted that China needed to enter the war. Perhaps due to the lingering feverish atmosphere of that anniversary day, Mao's view prevailed.⁷¹

With that spirit, Mao stayed up late and wrote two telegrams, one to Gao Gang and Deng Hua, and the other meant to be sent to Stalin. It was already around 2 am on October 2. Mao instructed to Gao Gang to come to Beijing, and Deng Hua to complete preparation of the Northeast Border Defense Army and put it on standby.⁷² To Stalin, he wrote:

We have decided to send a portion of our troops to Korea under the name of Volunteers in order to assist Korean comrades in fighting the troops of the United States and its running dog Syngman Rhee. If Korea were completely occupied by the Americans, the Koreans' revolutionary potency would be fundamentally destroyed, and the American invaders would be more rampant, and [such a situation would be] very unfavorable to the whole East.⁷³

In a part of this long telegram, Mao further explained a possible worst-case scenario, involving domestic concerns and possible repercussions of the war among the most unfavorable elements at home. He wrote:

We consider that the most unfavorable situation would be that the Chinese forces fail to destroy American troops in large numbers in Korea, thus resulting in a stalemate, while the U.S. openly enters the war against China. [That situation] would be destructive to China's economic construction already under way, and would cause discontents toward us among the national bourgeoisie and other sectors of the people (they are afraid of war).⁷⁴

This telegram, however, was not sent to Moscow. On that day, October 2, the meeting of the Politburo Standing Committee was held at Zhongnanhai, and, to Mao's surprise, virtually everyone except for himself expressed skepticism,

⁷¹ Shen Zhihua, 184, Chen Jian, 173.

⁷² Mao Zedong, *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* [Mao Zedong's Collected Works After the Establishment of the Country], vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian Chubanshe, 1987), 538.

⁷³ Ibid, 539-41; Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War*, 175.

⁷⁴ Mao Zedong, *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao*, 540; Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War*, 176.

pessimism, or even opposition toward his idea of entering the Korean War in support of North Korea. Lin Biao expressed reservations, as well, and refused Mao's request to be a commander of Chinese forces.

Faced with unexpected opposition among the CCP leadership, instead of sending his draft to Moscow, Mao met with N. V. Roschin, Soviet Ambassador to China late at night on October 2, orally informed him that China was not ready to enter the war at this point. Mao explained that China's entry would entail "extremely serious consequences;" first of all, U.S. forces would overpower China, since China's military capability was nowhere near to that of the United States. Second, China's entry could bring about open warfare between China and the United States, which could lead to the possibility of pulling the Soviet Union into the war. Much worse, such a situation would cause the entire program of building the country to deteriorate, possibly provoking many people's discontent toward the communist regime. Thus, Mao recommended that North Korea take on a guerrilla warfare strategy, and, in the end, while adding that the final decision had not been made, Mao concluded that it would be better to show patience, refrain from advancing troops, and prepare troops until a time more advantageous to China.⁷⁵

Roschin was surprised by Mao's reply, informing Stalin on the following day, October 3, that the Chinese leadership had changed its opinion. Stalin, who

⁷⁵ "Ciphered telegram from Roshchin in Beijing to Filippov [Stalin], October 3, 1950, conveying October 2, 1950 message from Mao to Stalin," in CWIHP Digital Archives: The Korean War, available at <<http://www.wilsoncenter.org/digital-archive>>; also, Shen Zhihua, *Chaoxian zhanzheng*, Vol. 2, 576-77; Yang Kuisong, 293-294; Xu Yan, *Mao Zedong yu Kang Mei Yuan Chao zhanzheng: zhengque er huihuang de yunchou weiwo* [Mao Zedong and a War of "Resisting America and Assisting Korea": Correct and Glorious Operation Planning] (Beijing: Jiefang jun, 2003), 86-87.

had been carefully avoiding a direct confrontation with the United States, may not have been particularly shocked. In fact, in the first draft of his reply to Mao Zedong, Stalin acknowledged Mao's reservations in view of domestic considerations. While continuing to strongly urge China to send troops to Korea on the basis that the United States was not yet fully prepared for a large-scale war, and that Japanese militarism had not yet recovered and would not provide any military support for the United States,⁷⁶ at the end of the draft, Stalin referred to domestic situations in China and accepted Mao's position. He wrote:

Your reply contains a consideration that is new to me, the one on the domestic situation of China, which, in my opinion, is of decisive significance. You assert that, in case of a new war with regard to Korean events there will be very many malcontents in the country, that there is strong longing for peace in the country. This means that China, with regard to its internal situation, is not ready for a new war. In such a big country as China, the future of the people is decided not by foreign policy factors, but by the factors of domestic situation. Of course, you should know the domestic situation in China better than anybody else. If the internal situation in China does not allow you to risk such steps that might lead to a new war, then one should think in general if one should undertake such a risk. Therefore I fully understand you and your position.⁷⁷

Stalin, however, did not send this draft on the spot. Instead, he revised and sent it on the night of the following day on October 5. In the final draft, Stalin's tone of urging China to send troops heightened with the addition of his own interpretation of China's domestic situations and possible consequences. Instead of simply accepting Mao's explanation that the new war against the United States would cause a rise in discontents, Stalin pointed out that, in this emerging war

⁷⁶ Niu Jun, "The Birth of the People's Republic of China and the Road to the Korean War" in Melvyn Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, vol. 1 (New York, 2010), 240-242.

⁷⁷ "New Evidence on Cold War Crises: Russian Documents on the Korean War, 1950-1953," Cold War International History Project *Bulletin*, Issue 14/15 (Winter 2003-Spring 2004), 376; Also, see, Shen Zhihua, *Chaoxian zhanzheng*, Vol. 2, 583-584.

situation, the bourgeois parties that were part of the Chinese coalition would exploit discontent in the country against the Chinese Communist Party and its leadership.⁷⁸

Mao Zedong and Chinese leadership probably did not need to listen to Stalin's analysis. It was already clear. They were keenly aware of and paid attention to such possible ramifications for domestic politics. In fact, Beijing did not wait for Stalin's reply. Before the message was orally conveyed to Mao Zedong on the night of October 6, Beijing's leadership had already confirmed China's entry into the Korean War. The decision was made in a series of CCP Central Committee Politburo meetings, held on October 4 and 5 in Zhongnanhai.

At the first meeting on October 4, the mood was not conducive for a decision to go to war. As in the meeting on October 2, virtually everyone except Mao expressed reservations.⁷⁹ From their viewpoint, there were five primary reasons for objection. First, wounds from previous wars had not healed and the Chinese economy remained weak. Second, land reform had not advanced and the newly established regime was not yet consolidated. Third, Taiwan and many other areas had yet to be captured, and there were still about a million "rebels" and "counterrevolutionaries." Fourth, China's military arsenal was far behind that of the United States, and, in particular, China had command of neither the air nor sea. Last, people and soldiers had a feeling of war-weariness.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Ibid; CUIHP *Bulletin*, 376-377; Shen Zhihua, *Chaoxian zhanzheng* Vol. 2, 582.

⁷⁹ Nie Rongzhen, *Nie Rongzhen yuanshuai huiyilu [General Nie Rongzhen Memoir]* (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 2005), 585-586; Shu Guang Zhang, *Mao's Military Romanticism*, 80-81.

⁸⁰ Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War*, 182; Shu Guan Zhang, 80; Shi Zhe, *Zai lishi juren shenbian: Shi Zhe huiyi lu* (Beijing: Zhong ang wenxian chubanshe, 1991), 494; Dangdai Zhongguo renwu zhuanji congshu bianji bu, *Peng Dehuai zhuan* (Beijing: Dangdai Zhongguo chubanshe, 1993),

Scholars have not yet agreed on the point whether or not Lin Biao, then the commander of the Fourth Field Army in the northeast, who was actually Mao's first choice to be commander of the CPV, attended the Politburo meetings on October 4 and 5, but some have argued that he attended those meetings and raised the strong objection. According to their accounts, Lin Biao insisted:

We just founded our country. It was not a long time ago. [...] National strength is still weak, and we do not have enough power to fight again. Especially we don't have the same level as the U.S. forces. Thus, I still have this view: we need to be cautious. We have already been at war for more than twenty years, and our energy has not recovered yet. [...]. America is the largest and strongest industrial nation with highly modernized military equipment. The U.S. has an extremely powerful air force and navy. [...] I believe strengthening the northeastern border is better way, avoiding "catching fire burning ourselves to death."⁸¹

Lin Biao's point was clear, and even similar to General Douglas MacArthur's analysis at that time. It is interesting to note that the oppositional voice against sending troops to Korea, expressed by Lin Biao, Liu Shaoqi, Gao Gang and others, was grounded in domestic and military concerns.

The tide of discussion changed in the meeting held on October 5. Peng Dehuai, who had just been asked by Mao to be a commander of Chinese forces that morning, delivered an impassioned speech, asserting that China would need to enter the war for three reasons. First, if American forces were to stay in Taiwan and Korea, they could find an excuse to invade China at any time. Second, if

401-402; Nie Rongzheng (2005), 585-587; Peng Dehuai, *Peng Dehuai junshi wenxuan [The Collected Works of Peng Dehuai]* (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1988), 320-21; Zhang Xi, "Peng Dehuai Shouming Shuaishi Kangmei Yuanchao de Qianqian Houhou [Before and After Peng Dehuai's appointment to command the war of 'Resist America and Assist Korea'," in *Zhong gong dang shi zi liao* 31 (October 1989), 132; Zhang Min and Zhang Xiujuan, *Zhou Enlai yu Kang Mei Yuan Chao Zhanzheng [Zhou Enlai and a War of "Resist America and Assist Korea"]* (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2000), 123.

⁸¹ Li De and Shu Yun ed., *Lin Biao Riji [Lin Biao's Daily Account]* vol. 2 (Taipei, Taiwan: 2009), 678; Zhang Min and Zhang Xiujuan, 122-23; Yang Fengan and Wang Tiancheng, *Beiwei Sanshi-Ba du xian: Peng Dehuai yu Chaoxian zhanzheng [The 38th Parallel: Peng Dehuai and the Korean War]* (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 2000), 93-95; Shu Guang Zhang, 80.

Americans occupied the Korean peninsula, future problems could be more complicated. Third, in doing this, China could give a serious blow to “domestic and international reactionary spirits” and the “*Qin-Mei* [sympathizing with America] elements.”⁸²

Peng Dehuai developed the last portion of this argument several days later in speeches before high-ranking military officials in the northeast, saying that, if China would not actively dispatch troops to support the Korean revolutionary government and its people, domestic and international counterrevolutionaries’ spirits could begin to rise, and *Qin-Mei* [sympathizing with America] elements in society would be able to become active.”⁸³ For these reasons, Peng insisted, attacking earlier would be better than having to do so later. Peng’s powerful assertion had a strong impression on other participants in the meeting, eventually bringing the Politburo to back Mao’s stance of sending troops to Korea.⁸⁴ It is important to note that, while Lin Biao and other members used domestic and military arguments to oppose it, Peng Dehuai listed different sets of domestic and military rationales to advocate China’s entry into the war.

The Politburo’s decision, however, remained in flux for another two weeks due to Stalin’s ambiguous attitude. In a prolonged 10-hour-long meeting among Stalin, Zhou Enlai, and Lin Biao on October 10-11, Stalin clarified that the Soviet Union would not be able to provide air support for Korea in short order.⁸⁵ The

⁸² Zhang Xi, 136; Nie Rongzhen, 587; Wang Yan, 402-403; Chen Jian, 183-84; Shu Ken’ei [Zhu Jianrong], 268-69.

⁸³ Peng Dehuai, 322; Zhang Xi, 53; Chen Jian, 183-84.

⁸⁴ Nie Rongzhen, 587.

⁸⁵ Chen Jian, 197-200; Shu Guang Zhang, 83. Shu Ken’ei [Zhu Jianrong] deals with this topic in detail. See Shu Ken’ei, 327-44.

Chinese side felt betrayed by this statement, as they made a decision on the premise that the Soviet Union would provide air support for Chinese land forces. This belief was derived from series of Moscow-Beijing correspondence in July of 1950, in which Moscow recommended that Beijing move Chinese divisions to the Chinese-Korean border in case the U.S. crossed the 38th Parallel, and vaguely promised that the USSR would “try to provide air cover for these units.” Thus, it might be possible that, from Moscow’s perspective, Stalin’s promise of air cover was, from the beginning, limited to Chinese forces on the Chinese-Korean border, and did not include air support over the Korean peninsula in the war.

Because of this discrepancy over the issue of air support, Zhou Enlai and Lin Biao viewed sending troops to Korea as simply impossible. While Stalin continued to counsel them to accept China’s entry into the war, he could not convince them. Eventually, Stalin and Zhou agreed that China would not send troops to Korea, and that they would give up North Korea, letting Kim Il-sung and his troops evacuate to the northeastern region of China.⁸⁶ A telegram under the joint signature of Stalin and Zhou was sent to Beijing on October 11, to which Mao replied on the next day, confirming that he agreed to this arrangement, and that he had already given instructions to halt the plan to enter Korea. Mao also immediately canceled the movements of divisions stationing in Shandong to the northeast.⁸⁷ Receiving Mao’s reply, Stalin telegraphed Kim Il-sung on October 13, informing him that China would not enter the war, and recommending guerrilla warfare in the northeastern region of China. Stalin also ordered Molotov, on that

⁸⁶ Shen Zhihua, 196-197; Yang Kuisong, 298-99;

⁸⁷ Shu Guang Zhang, 83.

day, to assist with Kim's evacuation. The Korean War, thus, might have ended at this point with the defeat of North Korea.

To the surprise of Stalin, however, Beijing overturned Moscow's advice and decided to send troops to Korea even without Soviet air support. After receiving Stalin's telegram on the afternoon of October 12, Mao, on the one hand, notified Moscow that he had halted the plan to send troops, and, on the other hand, summoned Peng Dehuai and Gao Gang to Beijing to have an emergency meeting on October 13. Through discussing the pros and cons and various consequences of not sending troops, the Beijing leadership eventually reached the conclusion that they had no choice but to enter the war.⁸⁸ Mao wrote to Zhou Enlai in Moscow after the meeting:

As a result of discussions with Gao Gang, Peng Dehuai, and other comrades of the Politburo, we all recognize that it is still advantageous to send our troops to Korea. [...]. The active policy we adopted would be extremely beneficial to China, Korea, the East, and the world. If we will not send troops and let the enemy reach the banks of the Yalu River, domestic and international reactionary spirits will rise up, which would be detrimental to all of these aspects. It would be particularly more unfavorable to the northeast [of China]; the entire Northeast Border Defense Army would have to be tied-up down there, and the electric power plants in south Manchuria would be under the enemy's control.⁸⁹

As shown in this telegram, Beijing's consideration was multifold. It was surely concerned with border security, but also apprehensive about more vague and far-reaching effects of U.S. forces' victory in Korea, that is, a possible increase in "reactionary spirits" at home and abroad.

⁸⁸ Chen Jian, 201-202.

⁸⁹ Telegram, Mao Zedong to Zhou Enlai, October 13, 1950, in Mao Zedong Quanjì Vol. 6 (1999), 103-104; Jiangguo yilai Mao Zedong, 556; Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War*, 202; and Shu Guang Zhang, 184.

The examination of Beijing's reasoning in this series of discussions sheds light on several important historiographical issues. First of all, it is clear that Beijing entered the Korean War not because of "intense pressures" from Moscow.⁹⁰ To be sure, Stalin had been encouraging Beijing to assist North Korea; in particular, Stalin's message, dispatched at 11 pm on October 5, has been well known among researchers because of Stalin's famous declaration that the communist camp should not fear war against the United States, adding, "If a war is inevitable, then let it be waged now."⁹¹ However, the arrival of this message did not affect Beijing's policymaking; it was delivered at 10:30 pm on October 6, that is, one day after the CCP Politburo reached its conclusion, and this was the same meeting in which Mao Zedong conveyed the Politburo's decision to send troops to Korea.⁹²

Furthermore, as historian Kathryn Weathersby points out, Stalin remained cautious, taking every effort to avoid a military confrontation with the United States.⁹³ In fact, when the controversy over air support loomed and the Chinese leadership refused to send ground troops in the meeting on October 10-11, Stalin gave up North Korea, instructing Kim Il-song to evacuate to China. It was the Beijing leadership that overturned Stalin's suggestion and informed Moscow that China would send troops regardless of the Soviets' stance.

⁹⁰ John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know*, 80-81.

⁹¹ Shen Zhihua, Vol. 2, 581-582; CWIHP *Bulletin*, Issue 14/15 (Winter 2003-Spring 2004), 370, 375-376.

⁹² *Ibid*, 370.

⁹³ Kathryn Weathersby, "'Should We Fear This?': Stalin and the Danger of War with America," *CWIHP Working Paper Series*, No. 39 (July 2002), 19-20.

By the same token, it is reasonable to say that the U.S. military action of crossing the 38th Parallel was only one of a number of factors that brought Beijing to choose war. If American action had been the primary factor, China's decision would have been made afterwards, and Beijing should not have wavered on its stance after that. But, in fact, Beijing's decision was contemplated before the event, while its decision was overturned and reconsidered again and again until the moment of Chinese forces actual crossing of the Yalu River. To be sure, the prospect of U.S. forces' presence across the Yalu River posed a threat to the security of the border region. Yet, what concerned Beijing was more the *meaning* of that presence than the presence itself. In other words, we can see that the notion of "security" included not only the physical threat to the northeastern region, but far-reaching repercussions of impressions in people's minds.

In 1950, the People's Republic of China (PRC) was less than a year old, and had yet to build a strong foundation, and faced several critical issues. The Chinese economy had to be reconstructed along communist lines. Land reform, which had only began nationwide that summer, had already produced serious problems. The anti-rightist movement was about to be launched. Civil War in southern and western parts of China had finally come to an end only in the spring of 1950, yet forces of resistance and counterrevolution were still active all over the country. In addition, Tibet and Taiwan were not under CCP control. Last but not least, although revolutionary enthusiasm was strong in some portions of the population, another unignorable portion of the population remained doubtful, if not overtly hostile, toward the CCP's legitimacy.

Although such domestic problems were the primary reason for the CCP leadership's reluctance to enter into large-scale warfare, the same domestic problems weighed heavily on their decision to enter the Korean War. This is because the image of "America" had been symbolically connected with the "enemy" in *all* communist programs at home since the late 1940s, including reconstruction of the economy, land reform, the anti-rightist movement, suppression of various kinds of counter-revolutionaries, and, most of all, the continuation of the Civil War. Therefore, America's intervention in Korea in July 1950 created a dilemma: to enter into the war might be a great burden for China, slowing CCP's reconstruction programs. However, all of those programs might be damaged, if not destroyed, if Beijing did not take on an aggressive policy in the war.

The Korean War was, in a sense, a test case for the CCP's legitimacy and identity in the turbulent, uncertain period following the Chinese Civil War. What Beijing had to seek was not merely border security but also maintaining favorable popular impressions and domestic social equilibrium at home, through maintaining border security. Viewed in this way, Beijing's aggressive posture does not seem like a mere reflection of Mao's personality or his revolutionary enthusiasm. If Beijing's decision had been based on Mao's personal characteristics or enthusiasm, the decision could have been made much earlier, with little hesitation, and should not have fluctuated once the decision was made. Yet, as we have seen, Beijing's decision swayed back and forth, tilted by various circumstantial changes. Therefore, it would be more reasonable to say that Beijing's decision was built more on the leadership's periodic observations of

social attitudes, its fear of withering revolutionary support at home, and its quite practical needs concerning the consolidation of CCP legitimacy, given unpredictable and precarious domestic situations.

After a series of further discordance with Moscow and subsequent stop-and-go-signs each time, on October 18, Beijing was at last able to reconfirm its final order to send troops to Korea. While all communications and operations regarding military moves were conducted under cover, even ordinary people must have discerned that something serious was going on. In Shenyang, for instance, suddenly, extensive air raid precautions were begun, pillboxes erected, trenches dug in the streets, many factories dismantled and machinery moved to north, and many residents began evacuating. British diplomats in Beijing collected scattered pieces of information, from sources such as travelers from Shanghai who testified that they saw Shanghai's CCP armies moving up to Shenyang, or a foreign businessman who affirmed that Shenyang was in a mood of "considerable panic." Analyzing these bits of information, a British report on October 24, concluded, "It is clear that the measures may portend some new move on the part of the Chinese Government in connection with Korea for which they fear severe retaliation." The British observation was accurate. Chinese forces, under the rubric of the Chinese People's Volunteers, crossed the Yalu River beginning on the night of October 19, 1950, and a total of 260,000 troops entered North Korean territory.

"Reality" Still Unsettled

China's entry into the Korean War in the fall of 1950 had far-reaching, though mostly unintentional, effects in many parts of the world. As was the case for the outbreak of the Korean War, China's action was "understood" in many places in many different ways according to local contexts. Often it was arbitrarily associated with local struggles, eventually contributing to social, cultural, and political shifts in distant places. Still, perhaps, nowhere on earth were more profound convulsions felt than within China itself. The most noticeable change occurred in newspapers. In early November of 1950, a communist organ, *Renmin Ribao* at last changed its cautious and relatively low-key tone that had prevailed since July to one that was more aggressive and harshly anti-American. "Who has been feeding Chiang Kai-shek [Jiang Jieshi]? Who has spent \$6 billion in support of reactionaries in China? [...] Who has destroyed world peace? Who has raped our sisters? Who has been our worst and deadliest enemy?" asked a poem entitled "American Killer" on November 26, answering its own question: "That is American imperial invaders! American demons!"⁹⁴

Following a series of Chinese victories in November and early December, *Renmin Ribao* completely changed its attitude. On December 7, a cartoon in the newspaper depicted the "Chinese people," who had been described previously as supportive observers, now as important participants in the conflict, with a strong determination to drive U.S. forces from Korea (Picture 2).⁹⁵ On the next day, *Renmin Ribao* published an eight-line poem, accompanying a photo of gift bags for soldiers. It read:

⁹⁴ *Renmin Ribao*, 25 November 1950.

⁹⁵ *Renmin Ribao*, 7 December 1950.

Thousands of comfort bags
Thousands of comfort letters
Thousands of Chinese people's respect and love
Devote [them] to the heroic soldiers on the Korean front
Bravely advance to the south
Continuously advance to the south
To Seoul, to the seashore
Our hearts are with you forever.⁹⁶

The publication of this poem was a significant jump for *Renmin Ribao*, which had been making a cautious effort to differentiate the Korean War from Chinese people's business, and continued to obscure China's aims in the war. The poem clearly anticipated Chinese forces' crossing of the 38th parallel and the "recovery" of Seoul, and even implied the unification of the Korean Peninsula through its evocation of the "seashore."

The unstated but radical change in *Renmin Ribao* occurred immediately following the Chinese and North Korean forces' capture of Pyongyang on December 6, 1950, which came almost out of blue for many Chinese people, who doubted that Chinese armies had any chance of defeating American forces.⁹⁷ This is why the event had an enormous impact on the current of popular attitudes in society. A local communist cadre in Fuzhou, for example, observed that peasants, in particular, were delighted by news of the CPV's victory, while, reportedly, many landlords in the area found it discouraging.⁹⁸ Likewise, in rural areas of the Hunan Province, passions for participating in the CPV quickly increased; the local committee suddenly received more than 2,000 applicants by the end of

⁹⁶ *Renmin Ribao*, 8 December 1950.

⁹⁷ "Zhonggong Shanghaishi Dachang quwei xuanchuanbu guanyu qingzhu pingrang jiefang de qingkuang baogao [The propaganda division of the Dachang district committee of CCP Shanghai committee concerning a report on the celebration of Pyongyang's liberation]," December 15, 1950, A71-2-883-25, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

December.⁹⁹ Similar scenes could be witnessed in northeastern provinces, such as Rehe, Jilin, and Heilongjiang, as well.

By the same token, news of the CPV's victory aroused the enthusiasm among many people (Picture 3). Many students began volunteering to attend the Military Academy, groups of medical students joined in the army to go to Korea, peasants began submitting foodstuffs more enthusiastically and punctually, and many people began believing that the United States was indeed a paper tiger. A similar shift in popular sentiments from doubt to belief was brought to the attention of Beijing from Qingdao, Shanghai, Fuzhou, and other regions of the country.¹⁰⁰ One such internal report from northern China noted that some people had even begun taking a more hawkish tone, asserting, "We should not give Americans time to rest. Rather, we should go to the United States and defeat them completely."¹⁰¹

With the seizure of Pyongyang, Chinese people's views on their own country began changing, as well. One high school student reportedly said that he had previously looked down on his country because it had only numerous people without any airplanes or artillery, but now, after hearing the news of China's

⁹⁹ "Hunan Ruanjiang, Xiangxiang deng di nongmin relie yaoqiu canjun [Peasants of Ruanjiang and Xiangxiang in Hunan Province enthusiastically demand to join the army]," December 29, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

¹⁰⁰ "Pingrang jiefang hou Fuzhou, Qingdao gejie yiban sixiang zhuangkuang [The general thought situation in various circles in Fuzhou and Qingdao after the liberation of Pyongyang]," December 23, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

¹⁰¹ "Pingrang jiefang hou dongbei Rehe deng di renmin kaishi zizhang susheng he mabi sixiang [People in Rehe in the northeast region began developing expectations of quick victory and lowering their guard after the liberation of Pyongyang]," January 13, 1951, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

victory, he had come to love his fatherland.¹⁰² A well-known Shanghai businessman, Liu Hongsheng, had similar feelings; initially dubious about China's campaigns against the United States, Liu changed his view after China's victorious advances in the battlefield, recalling later, "For the first time in my life, I am proud to be Chinese."¹⁰³ This was a moment when patriotism and pride developed quickly in China, as well as when a large number of Westerners finally decided to leave China.¹⁰⁴

The Chinese communist leadership would have been satisfied if this sort of attitude was unanimous in society. Needless to say, it was not. Even after China's entry into the war, and the CPV's victories over American forces, many remained doubtful, indifferent, or hostile to Beijing's policies. The Beijing municipal committee observed in November of 1950, for instance, that "not a small number of people" maintained a negative attitude regarding China's entry into the war, and that, in particular, intellectuals and businessmen expressed "'yes' in mouths 'no' in hearts" to the CCP's efforts at home and in Korea.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² "Kang Mei Yuan Chao yundong zhong zhongxuesheng de sixiang zhuangkuang [The thought situation of high school students in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements]," December 26, 1950, No. 100-001-00034, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

¹⁰³ Sherman Cochran, "Capitalists Choosing Communist China: The Liu Family of Shanghai, 1948-56," in Brown and Pickowicz ed., *Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People's Republic of China*, pp. 378-79.

¹⁰⁴ "Pingrang jiefang hou Jinshi Ying, Mei, Fa deng guo qiaomin hen konghuang zhunbei jizhong chetui [British, American, and French residents in Tianjin feel terrified and are preparing for mass withdrawal after the liberation of Pyongyang]," December 23, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

¹⁰⁵ Beijing shi dangan guan yanjiushi ed., "Beijing shi yu kang-Mei yuan-Chao-Report on 'Resist America and Assist Korea' campaign," a memo from Beijing municipal committee to the Central Committee, 5 November 1950, in *Lengzhan guojishi yanjiu [Cold War International History Studies]*, 398; Ibid, "The Second Report on 'Resist America and Assist Korea' campaign," a memo from Beijing municipal committee to Chairman Mao and the Central Committee, 12 November 1950, *Lengzhan guojishi yanjiu [Cold War International History Studies]*, 403.

The existence of such possible turncoats, that is, possible enemies within, was particularly menacing in view of the continuing chaotic domestic situation in China even following the Chinese entry into the Korean War in the late fall of 1950. In Shanghai, for instance, a statue of Mao Zedong at the Meixi Elementary School was destroyed in early November, with a flyer left on it, reading “Defeat Mao Zedong!”¹⁰⁶ Throughout November, graffiti and numerous bills suddenly appeared in many places. Anti-communist slogans, such as “If Mao Zedong and Zhu De stay, the war will never end,” appeared in the bathrooms and on walls of, at least, the Dongji High School, Minli Female School, Qingxin Female School, and Jiangnan Shipbuilding School.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, the Jingye High School had two alleged incidents of arson, leading officials to conduct an investigation.¹⁰⁸ In Dalian, similar slogans, like “Defeat Moscow, Defeat Traitors—Communists,” appeared in the bathrooms of the *Boai* Market and on the wall of the Dalian Transportation Company, among a total of thirty-nine incidents.¹⁰⁹

Such sentiments were not limited to urban areas. Many rural areas similarly witnessed an increase in anti-communist activities, including food poisoning, arson, and murder. In a rural area in the western part of Sichuan Province, for instance, a series of incidents of untraceable food poisoning occurred

¹⁰⁶ “Zhonggong Shanghai shi Penglai quwei xuanchuanbu guanyu yiban sixiang qingkuang ji shishi xuanjiao gongzuo baogao [Report written by the propaganda division of the Penglai district committee in Shanghai concerning the general thought situation as well as propaganda working on current issues],” November 13, 1950, No. A22-2-20-25, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid; Also, “Shanghai dazhong xuexiao xuesheng choumei guannian shangwei wanquan shuli [Anti-American perceptions are not yet well established among college and high school students in Shanghai],” November 28, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

¹⁰⁹ “Shenyang, Lvda zuijin qunzhong sixiang dongtai ji dite huodong zhuangkuang [Recent thoughts trends among people in Shenyang and Lvda etc. and the situation of enemy agent activities],” November 30, *Neibu Cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

frequently in early November. The actual causes of these incidents is unknown, but it was reported that a former landlord poisoned a water well.¹¹⁰ In the same period, “reactionary” slogans often appeared, as well; some read: “Welcome the Nationalist Army back to the Mainland” and “The Communist Party is reducing the rich to poor and then slaughtering the poor.”¹¹¹

In newly “liberated” areas in southern and central regions of China, kinship played roles in undermining communist programs and unity. For instance, in Guizhou Province—one of the poorest regions and most remote from communist control—kinship relationships proved to be effectual in cutting off communist ties. According to an internal report sent from Guiyang, a typical case that utilized kinship, in a situation in which a Nationalist sympathizer was trying to induce a CCP sympathizer, worked as follows: “Why don’t we re-unite our family group again? You and I had a good relationship before, didn’t we? You are now deceived by the communists and are following a different path, but, if you think it over again and regret it now, we can cancel out your past, and assure you a future position and work.”¹¹²

In addition to such “gentle” persuasion, more straightforward measures—threats and assassinations—were taken, as well. In Guiyang, untraceable letters were sent to local chiefs of communist agricultural associations, threatening and urging them to surrender with promises of amnesty. Furthermore, rumors spread

¹¹⁰ “Chuangxi dizhu pohuai huodong zhuangkuang [The situation of landlords’ destructive activities in Chuangxi],” December 7, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² “Guomindang tewu zai Guiyang sanbo yaoyan [*Guomindang*’s agents spread rumors in Guiyang],” November 28, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

that one could receive a ton of white rice for the murder of an association chief. In fact, a local chief's entire family was reportedly killed near Chengdu, their bodies thrown into a river, though we do not know whether the killer actually received tons of white rice.¹¹³ In such a situation, it is not surprising that former landlords felt a bit heartened, while newly "liberated" peasants felt scared. According to an internal report sent in November 1950, a peasant named Liu Chongyi refused to receive land distributed through communist land reform, and another moved out of a house which was similarly allocated through a communist program, saying, "My former landlord will come back and I will be killed if I stay here."¹¹⁴ Local cadres in villages had difficulties in arguing with such views because the amount of news and reports had been radically reduced, so that they did not know how to refute rumors.¹¹⁵

In the fall of 1950, government officials were keenly aware of an increasingly chaotic climate in society. "Chaotic" is perhaps a more appropriate term to describe the situation at that time than "state controlled" or "monolithic." As a British diplomat pointed out, it would be a mistake to view the communist regime as strong, consolidated, or lacking conflict.¹¹⁶ Observing the situation, a local communist official in Shenyang wrote a lengthy internal report concerning the social situation and public order based on materials from the Police

¹¹³ Ibid; Also, "Chuanxi dizhu pohuai huodong zhuangkuang [The situation of landlords' destructive activities in Chuangxi]," December 7, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

¹¹⁴ "Shenyang, Lvda zuijin qunzhong sixiang dongtai ji dite huodong zhuangkuang [Recent thoughts trends among people in Shenyang and Lüda etc. and the situation of enemy agent activities]," November 30, *Neibu Cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

¹¹⁵ "Wuxi nongcun ganbu wufa jipo yapyan hen kumen [Cadres in villages of Wuxi unable to refute rumors, feeling much depressed]," December 5, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

¹¹⁶ Memorandum (From A.A.E. Franklin to J.S.H. Shattock), January 11, 1951, FO371/92192, BNA, Kew, UK.

Department in the City of Shenyang. The report was reprinted on November 30 in *Neibu cankao*, the Communist Party's internal bulletin, issued daily and circulated among only an extremely limited number of high-ranking governmental officials.¹¹⁷ The report read:

A large majority of the population (workers, peasants, students and so on) in Shenyang recognizes the justice of our volunteer army in the war for the liberation of the Korean people, and believes in our victory, thus strictly observing law and order and positively participating in their work. [...].

However, a small portion of the people is afraid of American weapons and ravages of war, leading to unrest and fear. In the Five-One Plant, for example, more than 1,200 workers were absent from work for several days after October 19th. In another plant, about 450 workers—roughly 28 percent of the total—deserted their jobs in the two weeks following October 10th. At the Medical University, eighteen students ran away, and these kinds of sentiments are already affecting our party and organization members, especially those from Southern China. [...]. Our enemies' destructive activities are growing. Reactionary groups—remnants of Chiang Kai-shek's troops and land lords—recognize that now is the time to change the government, and they are feeling extremely excited, becoming active, and spreading rumors and making trouble. [...].

Given the increase in enemy activity, we now see reactionary slogans everywhere; in October alone, we have found about thirty reactionary slogans and graffiti in twenty-nine locations, including elementary and middle/high schools, the Sanitation Department, Army Hospital, an iron mill, rubber plant, machine manufacturing plant, chemical factory, and electric paper manufacturing plant, all in the city of Shenyang. Among these, thirteen were scribbled on bathroom walls, and others appeared on blackboards in schools, on street walls, and telephone poles, and even on the surface of a water pot and the insides of dishes. Their contents usually involve cursing the Communist Party, intimidating party and organization members, or sowing discord within the Sino-Soviet relationship. For instance, "Defeat the Soviet Union," "Party and Youth League members, be careful of your skull," and so on.

On October 17th, sixteen bills and posters labeled "Anti-Communist Save-the-Nation Youth Association" appeared in three alleyways in Haichang, Nenjiang, and Andong, as well as on Nansi Street in the Heping District, which is under the jurisdiction of the Kaiming Police Branch; On October 20th, another four reactionary posters were found in the bathroom of the paint processing plant; On October 23rd, twelve reactionary leaflets were found in a mailbox on Taiyuan Street, all urging the youth to conduct counterrevolutionary activities and propagate military victories against the United States.

¹¹⁷ Shen Zhihua, comments, the international conference, "China, the Third World, and the Cold War," Hangzhou, China, November 5-7, 2010. According to Shen Zhihua, circulation was limited to only high-ranking officials at the top of each communist organization. In the 1950s, only 2,400 copies were circulated nationwide.

Facing the aforementioned situation, in order to consolidate social order, maintain economic development, and prevent destruction by enemies, each factory and organization should conduct and deepen security education, heighten vigilance, tighten various rules, clarify and distinguish each responsibility to avoid suffering any loss. [...].¹¹⁸

This report includes several interesting points. First, it clearly demonstrates the existence of quite extensive doubts about the ruling communist party. Second, its meticulous manner indicates the capability of the Communist Party's organization even at the local level. Third, the document reveals the depth of local communist officials' concerns about social order, as well as the degree of their emphasis on the role of education and propaganda in maintaining the desired social order.

Finally, the report implies that, in the early years of the PRC, the line between enemies and friends was not particularly clear, and that, to the contrary, a large number of dubious elements existed within the "governing" system, including lower-ranking local government officials, policemen, public school teachers and professors, as well as various kinds of technocrats and engineers. These were the elite and professional class in society, who had worked for the Nationalist Government and remained in their positions under the Communist Government. In other words, a possible and most menacing threat to the legitimacy of the Beijing government actually resided within its own headquarters.

One might doubt the validity of the report itself, raising questions about whether the CCP deliberately stressed or even fabricated these "facts" in order to tighten control over the government and society, a manner of inquiry which might

¹¹⁸ "Shenyang, Lüda zuijin qunzhong sixiang huodong ji dite huodong zhuangkuang [Recent thought trends among people in Shengyang and Lüda etc. and the situation of enemy agent activities]," November 30, *Neibu Cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

be more appropriate for describing the situation in later years, such as 1952 and 1953. Such, however, was the effect of what happened in the early years of the PRC, but not necessarily the administration's initial intention or motivation. First and foremost the report was written for and read within a limited number of closed circles, without any propaganda role for the mass population. Moreover, contents of these reports were not necessarily altogether groundless fabrications, in view of contemporary anti-communist activity originating from Taiwan.

The Nationalist Party in Taiwan, in fact, had escalated its anti-communist campaign over the coastal areas of the mainland, particularly during the period from late September to December of 1950. In early November, for example, the Nationalist Party continually appealed to the mass public on the mainland through radio broadcasts, saying:

Our soldiers and compatriots on the mainland! [...]. Refuse to participate in the Army! Refuse to contribute foodstuffs! Refuse to go northward! Refuse to fight abroad! Oppose the invasion of the Soviet Union in Korea! If you find yourself on the front of the Korean War, refuse to attend operations and gather under the flag of the United Nations!¹¹⁹

The claims of such anti-communist campaigns across the Taiwan Strait did not necessarily appear implausible, especially in view of American presence in the Korean peninsula and Taiwan Strait. In fact, even after China's victories on the battlefield, some simply did not believe in news of those victories, anticipating that

¹¹⁹ "Zijiu jiuguo zuihao shiji [The best opportunity to self-help and save the country]," November 13, 1950, in *Fan Gong Kang E zhong de Jiang Jieshi zongtong* [Generalissimo Jiang Jieshi in the Anti-Communist and Resist Russia movements] (Taipei, 1950), 66, 101-4, Dangshiguan [Nationalist Party Archives], Taipei, Taiwan.

the United States would plan a direct landing, like the Inchon Landing, on the coast of Qindao or Shanghai.¹²⁰

In short, even following China's entry into the Korean War, and its victories on the battlefield, feelings of uneasiness in society had not disappeared and, rather, lingered as an issue with which officials had to deal. Unbelievable as it might sound, at this point even an eclipse became a source of anxiety for communist authorities. In early December, the communist local newspaper in Shanxi Province, for instance, explained the scientific mechanism of the eclipse, appealing to readers not to believe any rumors that would take advantage of worries among the masses at the time of eclipse.¹²¹ This suggests that the communist authority paid attention to any small incident that had the ability to damage the CCP's legitimacy.

This was because the situation surrounding the issue of legitimacy was still erratic and uncertain, and such an environment could change easily, depending on the progress of the Korean War. The war situation in Korea was becoming a key factor for the legitimacy of the newly established government—If Chinese forces were to win, pride and trust in the Beijing government would increase, while, if they were defeated on the battlefield, doubts and distrust toward communist authorities would develop at home. In a sense, battles in Korea were not just military and security issues but also political issues concerning the legitimacy of the government at home. Beijing's policymaking concerning the Korean War was

¹²⁰ "Pingrang jiefang hou Fuzhou, Qingdao gejie yiban sixiang zhuangkuang [The general thought situation in various circles in Fuzhou and Qingdao after the liberation of Pyongyang]," December 23, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

¹²¹ *Shanxi Ribao*, December 8, 1950.

conducted within such political and social circumstances, and its decision to cross the 38th Parallel southward was no exception. From the framing of the issue to the implementation of the plan, it was not just a military strategy but a matter of politics and impressions.

Advancing to the South

In the middle of the piercing cold night of December 31, 1950, the Chinese People's Volunteers (CPV) began their third-phase offensive and crossed the 38th Parallel southward.¹²² This offensive marked a symbolic watershed in the Korean War, signifying China's counterattack and America's retreat. In retrospect, Beijing could have terminated the war at this point by halting CPV forces at the parallel and declaring victory over the United States. Strategically, the CPV had already recovered most of North Korea's lost territory, and China's strong resolution and capability had been clearly demonstrated to the world. However, Chinese troops were approaching their combat and logistical limits.¹²³ In fact, the CPV's field commander, Peng Dehuai, had been reluctant to conduct this offensive. Peng understood the difficulty of the war situation and viewed Chinese forces as already fatigued and in need of rest. Furthermore, he had seen the lack of food and clothing supplies at the front. In his telegram to Beijing on December 8, 1950, Peng actually suggested that Chinese armies halt to the north of the parallel and

¹²² Wu Ruilin, *Kang Mei Yuan Chao zhong de di 42 jun* (Beijing: Jincheng, 1995), 80-81.

¹²³ Chen Jian, "China's Changing Aims during the Korean War, 1950-1951," *The Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 1 (Spring 1992), pp. 26-28; Chen Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), pp. 92-93; Shuguang Zhang, *Mao's Romanticism: China and the Korean War, 1950-1953* (Lawrence, Kan.: University of Kansas Press, 1995), p. 123; Hong Xuezhong, *Kang Mei yuan Chao zhanzheng huiyi [Memoirs of a War of "Resisting America and Assisting Korea"]* (Beijing: Jie fang jun wen yi, 1990), pp. 98-99.

conduct another offensive the following spring. This was expected by many in China, particularly those who had considered the dispatch of the CPV useless or dangerous, and who were surprised at the news of CPV's capture of Pyongyang in mid-December. Some businessmen in Fuzhou, for instance, reportedly expressed the hope that the war would end immediately if Chinese armies were to stop at the 38th Parallel.¹²⁴ Foreign observers expressed similar hopes; a newspaper in Japan, *Asahi Shinbun*, for instance, stated that the PRC would not need to worry about border security because no country in the Western camp had ambitions to invade China.¹²⁵ Beijing, in fact, was not concerned about it, either; Chinese policymakers did not think that the United States would attack the mainland.¹²⁶ Why, then, did China take an aggressive course, ignoring opportunities to end the war at this moment?

With regard to Beijing's decision to cross the 38th Parallel, scholars have presented several factors. First, Beijing was concerned that stopping at the 38th Parallel would give U.S. forces time to recover. Second, Kim Il Sung visited Beijing on December 3, pleading with Chinese authorities to advance Chinese armies southward across the parallel.¹²⁷ Third, Beijing had obtained an American

¹²⁴ "Pingrang jiefang hou Fuzhou, Qingdao gejie yiban sixiang zhuangkuang [The general thought situation in various circles in Fuzhou and Qingdao after the liberation of Pyongyang]," December 23, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

¹²⁵ Editorial, *Asahi Shinbun*, November 20, 1950.

¹²⁶ Shen Zhihua: "Chaoxian zhanzheng yanjiu zongshu: xin cailiao he xin kanfa [Summary of Korean War Studies: New Materials and New Perspectives]," *Zhonggong dangshi yanjiu* [CCP Historical Studies] (Vol. 6, 1996), 86-90; Niu Jun, *Reisenki Chugoku gaiko no seisaku kettei* [Policymaking of Chinese Diplomacy in the Cold War Period] (Tokyo: Chikura shobo, 2007); Niu Jun, "Yueguo San-ba xian—Political-military considerations and the fixation of the aim of the Resist-America-and-Assist-Korea War," *Zhonggong dangshi yanjiu* [CCP Historical Studies] (Vol. 1, 2002), 17-29.

¹²⁷ Shu Guang Zhang, *Mao's Romanticism*, p. 121; William Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 143-44.

intelligence report, suggesting that America would withdraw fully.¹²⁸ Fourth, Moscow pressured Beijing, stating, on December 7, “The cessation of military activity in Korea we consider incorrect in the present situation, when American troops are suffering defeat.”¹²⁹

Nevertheless, it might be hasty to attribute the decision to cross the 38th Parallel solely to military and diplomatic considerations or to Moscow’s pressure. Needless to say, there were numerous precedents for Beijing not following Moscow’s line, and, while Beijing and Moscow came to the same conclusion at this time, they, arguably, had different reasons. Another possible explanation for Beijing’s decision is domestic concerns about political consequences of stopping CPV armies at the 38th Parallel. Beijing was already aware of signs of the withering of revolutionary passion on the part of a large portion of the population, and it had been concerned about the fading of the line between friends and foes. Mao Zedong, in fact, turned his attention toward popular impressions in dealing with this international issue. Such a tendency can be seen in series of correspondence between Beijing and the battlefield. In a telegram to Peng Dehuai on December 13, for instance, Mao wrote:

The United States, Britain, and other countries are requiring our armies to halt to the north of the 38th Parallel, in order to reorganize their forces for another offensive. Therefore, our forces must cross the 38th parallel. If we were to arrive and stop to the north of the parallel, it would cause us serious political disadvantages.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Shu Guan Zhang, *Mao’s Romanticism*, 123.

¹²⁹ “CC Politburo decision with approved message to Vyshinsky in New York,” December 7, 1950, in *CWIHP Virtual Archive* “The Korean War”; “Telegram from Gromyko to Roshchin transmitting message from Filippov to Zhou Enlai,” December 7, 1950, in *CWIHP Virtual Archive* “The Korean War.”

¹³⁰ Mao Zedong, December 13, 1950, in *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* [Mao Zedong’s Collected Works After the Establishment of the Country]. vol. 1, 722.

Receiving Mao's telegram, Peng Dehuai once again replied with a long telegram four days later, warning of difficulties on the battlefield. In particular, he was worried about the rapid growth of "an unrealistic optimism for a quick victory" following the CPV's two major victories. In his view, US forces would not retreat soon, and the war would be "protracted and arduous." Peng wrote, "If our attack does not go smoothly, we will stop fighting right away. Whether we can and will control the 38th Parallel will depend on concrete conditions."¹³¹ Receiving Peng's message, Mao immediately responded, trying to explain the symbolic meaning of the third-phase offensive to cross the 38th Parallel. He wrote:

Your assessment of the enemy's situation is correct. [We] must be prepared for a protracted war. Now the United States and Britain are taking advantage of the old impression of the 38th Parallel in the people's minds for their political propaganda in order to force us to accept a cease-fire. Therefore, our forces must cross the parallel now and rest afterward.¹³²

Mao tried to explain the political impact of crossing the parallel in terms of impressions in the people's minds. In fact, in another telegram, Mao wrote that, after crossing the 38th Parallel, the CPV could return and rest north of the parallel.¹³³ Peng accepted Mao's instruction but remained ambivalent. Peng complained slightly:

In the mobilization for this offensive we have stressed the political significance of the crossing of the 38th Parallel (it is actually not that important politically). It will be more difficult for us to explain to our troops why we seized the 38th Parallel and gave it up afterwards. Once occupied, we may as well retain it if there are no other particular concerns involved.¹³⁴

¹³¹ Shu Guang Zhang, *Mao's Romanticism*, 126.

¹³² Mao Zedong, December 21, 1950, in *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao*, [Mao Zedong's Collected Works After the Establishment of the Country], 731-32.

¹³³ Du Ping, *Zai zhiyuanjun zongbu* [At the Headquarters of the Chinese People's Volunteers] (Beijing: Jie fang jun, 1989), 153.

¹³⁴ Yan Wang, *Peng Dehuai nianpu* [A Chronological Record of Peng Dehuai] (Beijing: Renmin, 1998) December 28, 1950, p. 460. Shuguang Zhang, *Mao's Romanticism*, 128.

On the next day, December 29, Mao again sent a telegram to Peng. He tried to clarify the political purpose and symbolic meaning of the third-phase offensive to reassure a seemingly dissatisfied field commander. Mao wrote:

The so-called 38th Parallel is an old impression in the people's mind, and will no longer exist after this campaign. It therefore does not matter whether our troops will rest and reorganize south or north of the 38th Parallel. [However,] if we do not launch this offensive, and if our forces spend the entire winter resting and reorganizing, it will arouse the capitalist countries to speculate a great deal [on our intentions] and cause the democratic nations to disdain us; should we gain another victory in early January [...], we will greatly impress the democratic front and the people of the capitalist countries, thereby striking a new blow at the imperialists and enhancing pessimism among them.¹³⁵

In a purely military sense, Mao's directions to Peng might have been nonsense, since he was suggesting that, although he had ordered the crossing of the 38th parallel, it would not matter whether or not the CPV retained it after the campaign. From a military commander's perspective, an offensive would not be necessary if the parallel were strategically unimportant.

Nevertheless, Mao's concern was not simply about military tactics. Rather, his focus was on *political impressions*. More specifically, he was contemplating the campaign's symbolic impact—a victory for communist China and a retreat for “American imperialism”—in the minds of people at home and abroad.¹³⁶ Mao viewed the crossing of the 38th Parallel as not only a military strategy, but a symbolic political—in a sense, public relations—victory. For Beijing, halting the Chinese armies at the 38th parallel would have meant a concession to the enemy,

¹³⁵ Shu Guang Zhang, *Mao's Romanticism*, p. 129; Yan Wang, *Peng Dehuai nianpu [A Chronological Record of Peng Dehuai]*, December 28, 1950, 460; and Xu Yan, *Mao Zedong yu Kang Mei Yuan Chao zhanzheng*, 171-172.

¹³⁶ Chen Jian, “China's Changing Aims during the Korean War, 1950-1951,” pp. 26-29, 40-41; Chen Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, pp. 61, 92-96.

the image of which would create, in Mao's words, a "serious political disadvantage," possibly hindering the progress of China's land reform, economic reconstruction, and anti-counterrevolutionary programs, as well as possibly causing actual withering of popular support for the newly established government.

In sum, Beijing's decisions to enter the Korean War and to cross the 38th Parallel were not just military issues. They were political issues. These decisions can be seen, in a sense, as parts of massive propaganda campaigns meant to solidify the very identity of the newly established government in millions of people's minds at home and abroad. This was the kind of politics which characterized the consolidation of the Cold War world during the Korean War period, and which can be observed not only in China but in the United States and other parts of the world: that is, the politics of truth-making.

Chapter 4: Pictures

Picture 1:

"Shanghai shi di shiliu mianfangsha chang 1950 nian qingzhu
guoqing youxing duiwu [A mass demonstration to celebrate the
National Day at Shanghai No. Sixteenth cotton spinning factory]

October 1, 1950

Shanghai, PRC

H1-31-2-59

Shanghai Municipal Archives, Shanghai, PRC



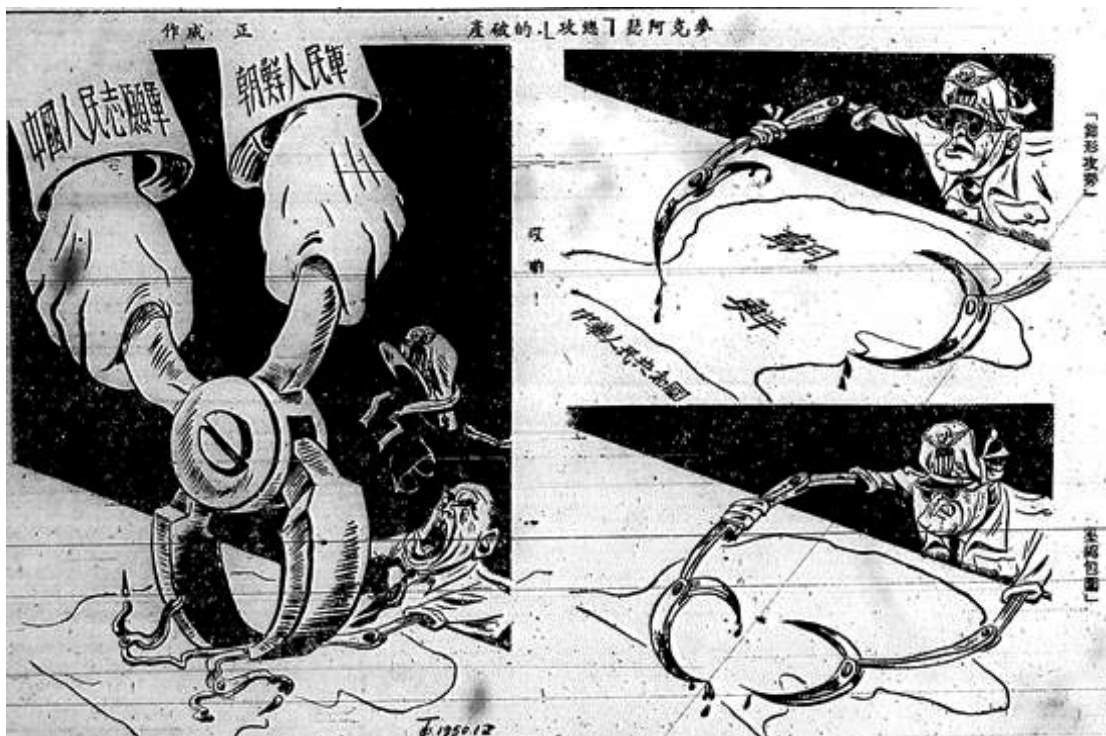
Picture 2:

“Failure of MacArthur’s ‘All-Out Attack’”

Renmin Ribao

December 4, 1950

(Beginning from the right side, MacArthur is cutting off Korea, but then, on the left, huge two hands of “Chinese People’s Army” and “Korean People’s Army” are chopping off MacArthur’s hands).



Picture 3-1:

"Shanghai di shiliu mianfangshachang fan Meidi [A demonstration against anti-American imperialism at the sixteenth cotton spinning factory in Shanghai]"
1951

H1-31-6-20
Shanghai Municipal Archives, Shanghai, PRC



H1-31-6-20

Picture 3-2:

"Kang-Mei yuan-Chao baojia weiguo: gei cangan huodong de
dongzhi xianhua [Resisting America and assisting Korea,
protecting home and defending country movement: Giving flower
to cadres attending youth workers' activities]
January 1951

H1-23-6-6

Shanghai Municipal Archives, Shanghai, PRC



H1-23-6-6

Picture 3-3:

"Qunzhong zai chezhan huansong Shanghai shi zhiyuan fuChao
yiliao shoushu di xi, wu dadui [The mass of people seeing off the
fourth and fifth voluntary medical groups going to Korea]"
July 27, 1951

H1-11-3-19

Shanghai Municipal Archives, Shanghai, PRC



Chapter 5: Truth-Making in Society

Few wars, if any, are the result of conspiracies by wicked men, whether the “wicked” be identified as diplomats, strategists, arms makers, industrialists, bankers, aristocrats, or demagogues. War occurs because all men value certain other things more than they value peace. Whatever these things may be, they are equated, quite honestly even if naïvely, with the cause of God against Satan.¹

Frederick L. Schuman, *International Politics* (1948)

All newspapers in Shanghai appeared five hours late on the morning of Sunday, November 12, 1950. It turned out that communist officials had arrived at each newspaper office around 4 a.m. on that day and closely scrutinized every news item.² Just a day earlier, there was a clear presentiment for this tightening-up of news censorship. The Chinese business manager of the *North China Daily News*, a British-owned English newspaper in Shanghai, was summoned by telephone to the Foreign Affairs Bureau. In the interview that followed, two senior communist officials conveyed to him an order of the Military Control Commission to the effect that there must be no more reports “against” either the People’s Republic of China or countries friendly to the PRC, and that publication of reports from news agencies or radio stations operated by “unfriendly imperialist countries”—which they meant Reuters, AP, and UP—must cease immediately.³ Following this notification on Saturday and surprise inspections on Sunday, the communist authority on Monday,

¹ Frederick L. Schuman, *International Politics*, 4th ed. (New York, 1948), 395.

² Telegram, Commonwealth Relations Office (hereafter CRO), UK, to High Commissioners, “Tightening-Up of Chinese Censorship,” November 24, 1950, in “China: Political Situation, November 1- February 23, 1951,” D0133/25, BNA, Kew, UK.

³ Telegram, CRO to High Commissioners, November 15, 1950, in “China: Political Situation, November 1- February 23, 1951,” D0133/25, BNA, Kew, UK.

November 13, sealed Reuter's receiving apparatus used by the *North China Daily News*, ruling out any hope for a relaxation of censorship. This, in a practical sense, was the moment that the historic newspaper, established in Shanghai by a British millionaire in 1850, ended its century-long history.⁴

By the same token, on the next day, Tuesday, November 14, all theaters in Beijing and Shanghai stopped screening American films altogether. In Beijing, the interior and exterior of all sixteen theaters were decorated with slogans written in eye-catching yellow letters on red cloth. All of these theaters held exhibitions of cartoons and pictures, and most set up megaphones in front for chanting slogans out loud.⁵ In the following weeks, these theaters screened thirty-one films—seventeen Chinese, thirteen Russian, and one North Korean, with titles like “Defend the Country, Preserve Family,” “Warriors in White Robes,” “A Chinese Girl,” and so on.⁶ Each show was interrupted frequently with cheers and shouts of greeting from the audience for “Chinese People's Volunteers!,” “Chairman Mao!,” and “Generalissimo Stalin!” In no time, newspapers in Beijing began publishing advertisements and film reviews every single day, and more than 50,000 large posters for those films were appearing everywhere in the city. According to an overall summary of the campaign,

⁴ Telegram, CRO to High Commissioners, “Tightening-Up of Chinese Censorship,” November 24, 1950, in “China: Political Situation, November 1- February 23, 1951,” D0133/25, BNA, Kew, UK. The publication of the *North China Daily News* was formally suspended in March 1951. The newspaper was named from a British perspective; Shanghai is in the “north” as opposed to Guangdong and Hong Kong in the “South” where the British had their territory. In Guangdong, too, all radio stations and radio transmitting equipment were required to be registered with the police in early December 1950. See letter, Trade Commissioner (Montgomery) to Board of Trade, UK, December 16, 1950, in “Extension of power of the ruling Chinese Communists over the political, social and economic life of the whole of China,” F0371/92192, BNA, Kew, UK.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ “Dianyingye tongye gonghui zai Kang Mei Yuan Chao yundong zhong de huodong qingkuang [Beijing Cinema Guild concerning the situation of activities in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements],” No. 022-012-00841, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

submitted by the Beijing Cinema Guild, during this period, a total of more than 400,000 people watched films in the sixteen theaters in Beijing. Similarly, in Shanghai, the Cinema Guild declared that the city had been suffering America's cultural invasion since its first screening of American films in 1926. "American films, which have inundated China like a flood, have raised a portion of our young people to be pro-American, and disarmed them psychologically," asserted the Shanghai Cinema Guild; "These films brought young people up to be idlers who don't make honest livings, reared them as weaklings, trained them to despise women, and made them decadent and degenerate, rotten and spoiled."⁷

The tightening-up of censorship in the news media and the spread of propaganda campaigns in film industries in mid-November 1950 came alongside the beginning and development of the "*kang-Mei yuan-Chao* [Resisting America and Assisting Korea]" movements, which swept over China and extended literally to every corner of people's daily lives during the Korean War period (Picture 1).⁸ Even within a couple of weeks in late November, various events and programs unfolded rapidly, including conferences, speech contests, study groups, meetings at tea houses, exhibitions of political cartoons, and various gatherings to discuss

⁷ "Shanghai shi wenhuaju guanyu Shanghai yingyuan zidong tingying Meidiguo yingpian de shenqing [The Shanghai Literacy Bureau concerning Shanghai theaters' application for voluntarily stopping screening of American films]," November 4, 1950, B172-1-33-1, SMA, Shanghai, PRC; "Shanghai shi Wenhuaju dui Meidiguo dianying de pipan baogao [The Shanghai Literacy Bureau's report on American imperialist's films]," November 1950, B172-1-33-30, SMA, Shanghai, PRC. Also see a British observation in telegram, CRO to High Commissioners, "Tightening-Up of Chinese Censorship," November 24, 1950, in "China: Political Situation, November 1- February 23, 1951," DO133/25, BNA, Kew, UK.

⁸ For discussion of earlier preliminary practices of Beijing's political mobilization in the summer of 1950, see, for example, Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 139-140.

imperialists' past crimes.⁹ With this rise in patriotism, tens of thousands, if not millions, of people became involved in these movements, forming a particular kind of consensus and social order in the newly established communist-revolutionary country, which eventually and effectively marginalized various kinds of dissidents and minorities. All of these campaigns, to be sure, were results of officially designed top-down programs, which were quite often coercive and brutal.¹⁰ And yet, to understand the spread and implementation of such movements, more explanation is needed. How did the Communist Party's propaganda campaigns function? How did a particular version of "truth" become dominant? Why did so many people participate in the movements?

Fear and Opposition

First and foremost, it is important to note that popular attitudes were not merely products of Communist Party propaganda. Nor were they monolithic. Since we know about the severe suppression under the communist rule in later years, it might be difficult to imagine open and bold criticism of the Chinese Communist Party. Yet, in the fall of 1950, such suppression was yet to come, and voices of straightforward, head-on opposition to Beijing's policy were audible. With the progress of the Korean War, Beijing's cautious and lenient attitude was about to change, but such a shift was not perceived in public, and, thus, many people seemed

⁹ "Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei xuanchuanbu jiaoqu gongzuo weiyuanhui shiyi yuefen xuanjiao gongzuo jiekuan [Summary of propaganda and educational working in November written by the suburban working committee of the propaganda division of the CCP Shanghai committee]," December 18, 1950, No. A22-2-6-210, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.

¹⁰ See, for instance, Chang and Halliday, *Mao: The Unknown Story* (New York: Knopf, 2005). For scholarly response to this book, see, Gregor Benton and Chun Lin, *Was Mao Really a Monster? : The Academic Response to Chang and Halliday's Mao, the Unknown Story* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

to have no reluctance in expressing objections, skepticism, or distrust toward decisions made by the Communist Party.¹¹

Among such objections, the lack of a just cause stood out. One elementary school teacher in Beijing, for instance, raised a question in November 1950: “We have been proclaiming that we support peace. Is it not contradictory if we send troops now?”¹² Such an opinion was not unusual, particularly among teachers. Another, similarly, said, “Dispatching troops to Korea is interference in Korea’s internal affairs, which clearly goes against the United Nation Charter.”¹³ Others even grew concerned that China would become an imperialist power if its troops were to remain in Korea.¹⁴ Business circles shared such concerns; a senior member of an electric company in Tianjin, for instance, said in late November, “China and Korea are after all two separate countries. Korea is not like Henan or Hebei Province where we can send troops and help them out. When we were fighting a civil war, did any countries come to China to help us? We should liberate Taiwan before going to Korea.”¹⁵

¹¹ For a general overview of the shift of Beijing’s stance, see, for instance, Xu Changbin ed., *Zhongguo gongchandang sixiang zhengzhi gongzuo shi* [A History of the Political Ideology Work of the Chinese Communist Party] (Haerbin, Heilongjiang jiaoyu chubanshe, 1990), 144-55. More detailed discussion, see, for instance, Yang Kuisong, “Zhongguo gongchandang dui zhongguo zichan jieji de renzhi jiqi celve [CCP’s perception and tactics toward the Chinese bourgeoisie],” *Jindaishi yanjiu* [Modern History Studies], Issue 3, 1993.

¹² “Beijingshi diliu quwei ge zhibu youguan Kang Mei Yuan Chao de qunzhong fanying ji xuanchuan zhihuizhan gongzuo jihua [Reports from various branch offices of the sixth district in Beijing concerning the common people’s reactions in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements and working plans for propaganda],” November 2, 1950, No. 038-001-00023, Beijing Municipal Archives (hereafter BMA), Beijing, PRC.

¹³ “Kang Mei Yuan Chao baojia weiguo shengzhong Chasheng gejie sixiang dongtai [Thought trends in various circles in Cha Province among the voices of the Resisting America and Assisting Korea and Protect Home Defend Country],” December 20, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, Chinese University in Hong Kong (hereafter CUHK), Hong Kong, PRC.

¹⁴ “Tianjin gejie dui muqian shiju de fanying [Responses in various circles in Tianjin regarding the current political situation],” November 18, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, Hong Kong, PRC.

¹⁵ “Jing-shi dianye gonghui deng bufeng zhigong dui muqian shiju de fanying [Reflections on the

In addition to such straightforward objections, feelings of distrust and fear were prevalent, in spite of, or, perhaps, because of waves of CCP propaganda campaigns. “The Communist Party’s propaganda deceives people,” said one worker in a factory in Shanghai, “It has been said that the United States is a paper tiger. But now the lie comes to light. In fact, American forces defeated North Korean armies and they are almost arriving at the Yalu River, aren’t they?”¹⁶ A local official in Changsha began to grow desperate, since many workers, shopkeepers, teachers, and students in the area happily read Hong Kong editions of *Da gong bao* and *Wen hui bao* and did not trust local communist newspapers, because they believed that local papers carried only “good” news for the party.¹⁷ Another official in Hangzhou similarly informed Beijing that many merchants in the city listened to and trusted the *Voice of America* on the radio.¹⁸ A manager of the *Zhongnan* Bank in Nanjing spat out, reportedly, “Nothing good would happen for China after entering the war. China’s shoreline is so long, and the Americans can make a landing offensive anytime. The Communist Party said that American forces are worn out, but actually it is Chinese armies that are dead tired.”¹⁹

political situation among workers in electronic industry labor unions in Tianjin],” November 24, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

¹⁶ “Shanghai, Tianjin deng di yaoyan yisu [A number of rumors in Shanghai and Tianjin etc.],” November 7, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

¹⁷ “Changsha ge jieceng dui muqian shiju de fanying liuchuan de yixie yaoyan [Rumors concerning the current political situation among various sectors in Changsha],” November 22, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

¹⁸ “Kang Mei Yuan Chao gaochao zhong Zhejiang mouxie qunzhong de sixiang zhuangkuang he yaoyan [Thought situation and rumors among the common people of Zhejiang in a high tide of the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements],” November 14, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

¹⁹ “Nanjing ge jieceng dui muqian shiju de fanying [Responses toward the current political situation among various sectors in Nanjing],” November 23, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

Such doubts provided countless topics for conversation, producing numerous rumors. In Xi'an, for instance, a rumor had it in November that the United States had already dropped an atomic bomb in northeastern China two weeks earlier, and that the communist government was going to move to an interior city, Lanzhou, more than 1,000 miles west of Beijing.²⁰ Other rumors in the Jiangxi Province maintained that the North Korean government had already escaped into Chinese territory, that U.S. forces had occupied Hainan Island, and that Chiang Kai-shek would begin a counteroffensive immediately.²¹ Similar rumors related to the Nationalist Party were particularly abundant, and tended to contain details, however wild they might have been, that made them appear "truer." One, in Changsha in November, asserted that the Nationalist Party, led by prominent GMD generals, Chen Cheng and He Yingqin, would attack the southern and middle part of China, and Okamura Yasuji, ex-commander of the Japanese military, would attack northern China, and General Douglas MacArthur would be in the command of the entire force.²²

Intriguingly, such rumors reflected certain myths widely held in Chinese society; in this case, Nationalist, Japanese, and American forces were bundled together in an effort to attack China. This kind of rumor usually proceeded as follows: World War III had already begun and Chiang Kai-shek, with the support of Japanese and American forces, would come back to the mainland by the following

²⁰ "Xi'an ge jieceng dui muqian shiju de fanying he gaidi de yixie yaoyan [Reactions and rumors related to the current political situation among various sectors in Xi'an]," November 16, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

²¹ "Jiangxi liuchuan de yaoyan he ge jieceng sixiang zhuangkuang," November 9, 1950, *Naibu cankao* [The thought situation among various sectors and rumors spreading in Jiangxi] CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

²² "Changsha ge jieceng dui muqian shiju de fanying liuchuan de yixie yaoyan [Rumors on current political situation among various sectors in Changsha]," November 22, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

year; and then it would be the Communist Party that would have to run away to Taiwan.²³ In a mood of deep pessimism, resignation, and desperation, a strange phenomenon occurred in many places in November 1950: people throwing parties, eating and drinking heavily. One internal bulletin reported on such parties in the northeastern area, describing one of them as including a lot of freshly butchered pork and chicken.²⁴

Behind such rumors and fears, it is not difficult to find certain historical preconceptions concerning both foreign countries and the Chinese people themselves. As we will see later in this chapter, many Americans at that time had particular images of China, such as one that described China as an incapable child—prejudice which helped to form a certain pattern of “reality” from an American perspective.²⁵ Interestingly, many Chinese had similar biases regarding themselves. One local communist official in Beijing, for example, said, “China is something like a child, while the United States is like a wall. How can a child move a wall? We should wait for a while until the child becomes an adult.”²⁶ Another senior official in

²³ “Wuxi, Suzhou dengdi liuchuan de yaoyan ji bufen ganbu qunzhong dui shiju de fanying [The spread of rumors in Wuxi and Suzhou etc. and reactions among some cadres and the common people toward the current political situation],” November 11, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

²⁴ “Liaodong, Liaoxi, Rehe, Heilongjiang deng sheng ge jiecheng shiju de fanying [Reactions toward the current political situation among various sectors in Liaodong, Liaoxi, Rehe, and Heilongjiang Province],” December 18, 1950; “Songjian sheng muqian ganbu, qunzhong sixiang dongtai [Thought trends at present among cadres and the common people in Songjian Province],” November 30, 1950; and “Rehe, Jinzhou deng di ganbu qunzhong dui Chaoxian zhanshi de fanying [Reactions toward the Korean War among cadres and the common people in Rehe and Jinzhou etc.],” July 22, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

²⁵ See, for instance, Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2001), 48-53; Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1987), 162-63; Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War: The Roaring of the Cataract* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 97; Harold Isaacs, *Scratches on Our Minds* (New York: J. Day Co., 1958); and T. Christopher Jespersen, *American Images of China, 1931-1949* (Stanford, Cal., Stanford University Press, 1996).

²⁶ “Beijingshi diliu quwei ge zhibu youguan Kang Mei Yuan Chao de qunzhong fanying ji xuanchuan zhihuizhan gongzuo jihua [Reports from various branch offices of the sixth district of Beijing

Shenyang made a similar comparison: “If the United States is a paper tiger, you know, China is less than a cat!”²⁷ One low-ranking policeman in the city, Zhao Wei, also lamented, “Who can match the United States? Who can stop Japan if they come back again? The Soviet Union is not so strong. Once they were severely defeated by the Japanese. I am a northeasterner myself and I know it very well.”²⁸

Rumors and fears of this kind typically maintained: Chiang Kai-shek, Japan, and the United States would attack China in no time; Americans would land near Shanghai, the Japanese would attack from Korea, and Chiang Kai-shek would make a counteroffensive from the South; then, the Communist Party would have to retreat to Taiwan.²⁹ These kinds of rumors often contained sequels, as well; the Nationalist Party would then cede the Beijing-Shanghai railways to Japan, Shanghai would go to Britain, and Tianjin and Qingdao to the United States; and these countries would dispatch their troops and quickly seize these territories.³⁰ Another version added France to this list of foreign powers, adding that the French would obtain the Guangxi Province, which is located next to Vietnam.³¹

concerning the common people’s reactions in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements and working plans for propaganda],” November 2, 1950, No. 038-001-00023, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

²⁷ “Shenyang, Lvda zuijin qunzhong sixiang dongtai ji dite huodong zhuangkuang [Recent thoughts trends among the common people in Shengyang and Lvda etc. and the situation of enemy agent activities],” November 30, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

²⁸ “Beijing shi diliu quwei ge zhibu yougan Kang Mei Yuan Chao de qunzhong fanying ji xuanchuang zhihui zhan gongzuo jihua [Reports from various branch offices of the sixth district of Beijing concerning the common people’s reactions in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements and working plans for propaganda],” November 1950, No. 038-001-00023, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

²⁹ “Chuanxi dizhu pohuai huodong zhuangkuang [The situation of landlords’ destructive activities in Chuangxi],” December 7, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

³⁰ “Wuxi, Suzhou deng di liuchuan de yaoyan ji bufen ganbu qunzhong dui shiju de fanying [The spread of rumors in Wuxi and Suzhou etc. and reactions among some cadres and people toward the current political situation],” November 11, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

³¹ “Changsha ge jieceng dui muqian shiju de fanying liuchuan de yixie yaoyan [Rumors on the current political situation among various sectors in Changsha],” November 22, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

Although names of foreign countries and their imagined acquisitions varied, many of these rumors and their preconceptions about foreign countries and themselves were rooted in historical experiences and memories of Western and Japanese colonialism. And it was such an association of historical memories with contemporary events in Korea that brought about another pattern of popular reactions that eventually contributed to the extension of the “Resisting America and Assisting Korea” movements: a surge in nativism and sense of pride, as well as fierce anti-colonial sentiments, particularly among the youth.

Consent and Participation

After hearing news of battlefield victories in early December 1950, excited students gathered in front of foreign embassies and consulates in Beijing, loudly shouting, “Defeat imperialism,” scribbling “Defeat American imperialists” on walls, and, eventually, even getting into fights with foreigners. The Beijing Municipal Committee later excused such incidents, asserting that they were the results of simple enthusiastic sentiments springing from the mob, and that they had nothing to do with the party organization.³² The Beijing Municipal Committee promised the Central Committee that it would prevent the recurrence of events like this. Concerned about such matters, one of the CCP’s top leaders, Liu Shaoqi, forwarded the memorandum to all provincial and municipal committees nationwide, requiring them to give attention to preventing such excessively antagonistic incidents against

³² Footnote in Liu Shaoqi, *Jian guo yi lai Liu Shaoqi wengao [Collected Works of Liu Shaoqi After the Establishment of the Country]* (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2005), p. 593.

foreigners.³³ As is clear from these incidents and the CCP response to them, anti-colonial and anti-American sentiments grew explosively in the fall of 1950, to an extent that often exceeded the party line.

By this point, numerous broadsides and posters had appeared at schools and universities in many cities. At Peking University, for example, new broadsides on the current issue were renewed every day, one after another, with estimated word counts at more than 60,000 a day (Picture 2). Some students and workers even wrote in blood, to which the Beijing Municipal Committee responded by ordering a stop to such practices. In addition, a signature collecting campaign in Beijing received, reportedly, 7,460 signatures in only three days.³⁴ Surprised by such a result, an official of the Beijing Municipal Committee wrote, "Student attendance is ardent. The number of signatures exceeds our original estimation. Moreover, this is not an event that is organized by force."³⁵ Such a rise in patriotism was unmistakable. A Senior Director of the Jardine Engineering Corporation in Hong Kong, Mr. H. Y. Hsu, visited Guangdong in the fall of 1950 and observed: "The tide of neo-patriotism has swept high, especially in the minds of young people. Everywhere in China one hears young people singing anti-American songs, and notices them

³³ "Telegram from Liu Shaoqi to regional, local, and municipal committees," *Jian guo yi lai Liu Shaoqi wengao* [A Collected Works of Liu Shaoqi After the Establishment of the Country] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian, 1998), December 7, 1950, 593.

³⁴ Beijing shi dang'an guan yanjiushi ed., "Report on 'Resisting America and Assisting Korea' campaign," a memo from the Beijing Municipal Committee to the Central Committee, November 5, 1950, in "Beijing yu Kan-Mei yuan-Chao," *Lengzhan guojishi yanjiu* [Cold War International History Studies], Vol. 2 (Spring/Summer 2005), 397-8; "The Second Report on the 'Resisting America and Assisting Korea' campaign," a memo from Beijing Municipal Committee to Chairman Mao, November 12, 1950, 402-3; and "Report on the situation regarding young students, workers, and military staff in schools," a memo from the Beijing Municipal Committee to the Central Committee, December 19, 1950, 404-5.

³⁵ Beijing shi dang'an guan yanjiushi ed., "Report on the situation regarding young students, workers, and military staff schools," a memo from Beijing Municipal Committee to the Central Committee, December 19, 1950, in *Lengzhan guojishi yanjiu* [Cold War International History Studies], 405.

rushing for military training, as they feel that they are fighting for a righteous cause and in order to defend their nation.”³⁶ As Mr. Hsu observed, the extension of such feelings was particularly evident in the daily lives of young people.

Let us take a look at one earnest student’s day in Shanghai, based on the observations of an anonymous British man in the city: at 10 a.m., the student participated in reading and discussion of current events as reported in the newspapers; from 2 to 4, the student attended a class discussion meeting; from 4 to 6, he attended another meeting of students who were planning to go to the Military Academy; finally after supper, he went with classmates to see a Russian World War II film, entitled “Berlin: An Impregnable Fortress.”³⁷ In addition to all of the above extracurricular activities, course work in the classroom was also associated with the “Resisting America and Assisting Korea” movements. A high school history course, for instance, introduced the history of American invasions of China since the mid-nineteenth century; a science course discussed how empty the threat of the atomic bomb was; an art class contributed to the production of anti-imperialist and anti-American drawings and cartoons; and a literature session provided students opportunities to read newspaper and magazine articles on current events.³⁸

To be sure, these activities and programs in schools were spread as part of CCP’s “Resisting America and Assisting Korea” movements. Yet, at the same time,

³⁶ H. Y. Hsu, “Notes by H. Y. Hsu,” January 4, 1951, in “Extension of the power of ruling Chinese Communists over the political, social and economic life of the whole of China,” FO371/92193, BNA, Kew, UK.

³⁷ Letter, “Student Life in China Today,” anonymous to the UK Foreign Office, December 15, 1950, in “Extension of power of the ruling Chinese Communists,” FO371/92192, BNA, Kew, UK.

³⁸ “Shanghai dazhong xuexiao xuesheng choumei guannian shangwei wanquan queli [Anti-American perceptions are not yet well established among college and high school students in Shanghai],” November 28, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

their daily practice and implementation was dependent on and conducted by numerous local actors, such as the devoted student mentioned above, in addition to classmates, teachers, and parents. These locals' enthusiastic participation was unignorable in understanding the scale and extension of the movements. One teacher in Shanghai, for example, expressed his sense of mission as an educator: "We have to convey to our youth and children the crimes of American Imperialism. We need to work on letting all of the Chinese people love our motherland, and to let them participate in this patriotic movement."³⁹ Such a call for patriotism did not appear out of place at that time. Many students and parents acted in concert. The aforementioned British man observed:

Many very fine students are actually volunteering to leave their middle schools and colleges to respond to "the call of the fatherland." It is a tragedy and a fact of great importance that such a large number of these young patriots are volunteering with their major motive that of resisting the U.S.A. Frequently one reads that it is a "sacred task to resist the U.S.A." When I asked one student what he was joining, he replied immediately, "The Air Force to bomb Americans."⁴⁰

This British man in Shanghai, then, lamented that many students who were academically speaking the best in class willingly stood up to volunteer, concluding that "the movement to 'answer the call of the fatherland' is definitely growing."⁴¹

We can catch a glimpse of the determination and, in some other cases, hesitation, among young students and workers at that time in hundreds of letters they sent to local communist offices. Many of these letters were preserved in the

³⁹ "Zhongguo jiaoyu gonghui Shanghai shi weiyuanhui guanyu Fangming tongzhi zuo de 'Wei baowei zuguo he qingnian ertong xingfu de jianglai er fendou' de baogao, [The Shanghai Committee of the Chinese Educational Guild concerning a report on Fang Ming's 'Struggles for the happy future of the youth and children as well as for the defense of our mother country']" December 9, 1950, No. C1-2-121-29, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.

⁴⁰ Letter, "Student Life in China Today," anonymous to Foreign Office, UK, December 15, 1950, in FO371/92192: "Extension of power of the ruling Chinese Communists," BNA, Kew, UK.

⁴¹ Ibid.

Beijing Municipal Archives, through which we can explore various reasons and emotions that drove many to participate into the war. One such letter, written by a student at Peking University, Yang Tiwei, read:

Today I have read articles in *Renmin Ribao*, reporting that many workers and students have expressed their willingness to enlist in the army to fight in Korea, and I was very much impressed. I realized that I should not stay out anymore, and that I just need to make myself into a volunteer soldier. Thus, I request the Party to dispatch me to Korea in order to participate in the battle against American Imperialism, and to make their forces disappear. [...]. I have been thinking about this issue since yesterday, and I think my thoughts are ripe enough now. I have no reason to stay here and not go to Korea. I have thought about my mother, [...] and I believe she should think that my enlistment is an honor. My volunteering is not something I can decide on by myself; it is the requirement of the era and revolution. I was born to a well-to-do family, and need to toughen myself. Let me be dispatched to the place where the battle is most fierce.⁴²

Like this student, many college students described their actions as responding to the demands of the era, while many others were simply convinced from their personal experiences; one policeman in Beijing, for instance, expressed, “When I was working as a policeman at a train station, I was often beaten and humiliated by the Japanese, Americans, and British. Now they are coming again. And I can go and fight them. Let me be sent to the front lines immediately.”⁴³

Reading these letters, one notes that the series of events, such as the outbreak of the Korean War, as well as American and Chinese interventions in the conflict, were often observed in a particular manner, as was the case with

⁴² Yang Tiwei, Letter to the Beijing Municipal Committee, November 2, 1950, in “Beijing daxue deng xiao daxuesheng shenqing Kang Mei Yuan Chao de zhiyuanshu [Volunteer applications for the Resisting America and Assisting Korea (War) written by college students at Peking University and other schools],” No. 001-009-00146, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

⁴³ Letters, November 1950, in “Shiqingguanju, Shi jiaolian deng danwei de tongzhi guanyu shenqing Kang Mei Yuan Chao de zhiyuanshu [Volunteer applications for the war of Resisting America and Assisting Korea written by cadres in units such as the Sanitary Bureau and Transportation Association in Shanghai],” No. 001-009-00146, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

Americans, in their own ways.⁴⁴ Such an interpretation of events, in effect, was more important than the events themselves, because it was such perceptions, not the events themselves, that shaped “reality.” In other words, how events were observed and understood was more influential than what the events actually were. And no events were observed in a vacuum; they were seen through observers’ particular historical, cultural, or even linguistic conditions. In China in the fall of 1950, memories of the War against Japan played certain roles in preparing historical contexts that became a basis for the understanding the outside world and current events. Such memories of war, on the one hand, provided a foundation onto which a whole set of mechanisms of state mobilization and people’s participation were built, while, on the other, being constructed and reproduced anew through these state and grassroots activities.

Memories of War and the Consolidation of “Truth”

This was particularly the case following the commencement of the “Resisting America and Assisting Korea” movements in November 1950. In fact, principle discussion topics in numerous meetings had less to do with American intervention in Korea than the War Against Japan. For instance, in a meeting organized by a Beijing branch office of the Chinese People’s Bank, participants primarily discussed their experiences during World War II. One expounded:

Today American imperialists follow the same path that the Japanese imperialists took before, seeking to take Asians and Chinese back to the days of colonialism and make them their slaves one more time. We have suffered the invasion of Japan;

⁴⁴ See, for instance, Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line*; Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and US Foreign Policy*; Isaacs, *Scratches on Our Minds* and T. Christopher Jespersen, *American Images of China*.

fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters were killed and violated. How much did our hearts hurt when our men were hung and beaten by the Japanese? I cannot even express it. We will never accept the same thing happening again.⁴⁵

In a similar manner, the Taxi Trade Guild resolved in November 22: “Now, war is approaching to the border of our northeastern area. American Imperialists are following the same path the Japanese took before: first invading Taiwan and Korea, then the northeastern part of China, and eventually attempting to invade China. Let us remember the time when the Japanese occupied the Northeast. What did they do? In terms of our business, for instance, long-distance buses had to be stopped. [...]. We should remember such a history of national ruin.”⁴⁶ In another meeting at a school in Beijing, one female teacher revealed a gang rape she suffered at the hands of Japanese soldiers in wartime, recalling memories and hatred of imperialism.⁴⁷

Memories of the War against Japan were, indeed, everywhere, providing many people a lens through which U.S. intervention in Korea was observed. A cartoon published in *Changjiang Ribao*, for instance, depicted an alleged America’s plan to invade China, describing it as a “Plot in the Same Old War” in comparison with Japanese Empire’s expansion beginning with the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95, the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, and the Manchurian Incident and the Sino-

⁴⁵ “Shiqingguanju, Shiwenlian deng danwei de tongzhi guanyu shenqing Kang Mei Yuan Chao de zhiyuanshu [Volunteer applications for the War of Resisting America and Assisting Korea written by cadres in units such as the Sanitary Bureau and Transportation Association in Shanghai],” November 1950, No. 001-009-00145, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

⁴⁶ “Kang Mei Yuan Chao shijian [Issues related to the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements],” November 22, 1950, No. 087-042-00064, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

⁴⁷ “Tuanshiwei deng guanyu dongyuan jiqingnian canjia junxiao gongzuo de baogao ji xiaoxue Kang Mei Yuan Chao de huodong zonghe baogao [The Youth League Committee concerning the work of mobilization of the youth to attend military schools, as well as its comprehensive report on the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements in elementary schools],” October 29, 1950, No. 001-009-00143, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

Japanese War (Picture 3).⁴⁸ As such, accusations of Japanese war crimes during the Sino-Japanese War, as well as Japan's rearmament, were quite common in meetings of Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements (Picture 4), even to the degree that some participants questioned whether or not there were too many stories about Japan.⁴⁹

It turned out, however, that this approach was most efficient and influential. The common logic maintained that American imperialists were copying Japanese imperialists, and their plan was to conquer China, Asia, and the entire world. It is interesting to look at the interplay between the reproduction of memory and the shaping of "reality," which was taken place during the Korean War. On the one hand, diverse memories of the Sino-Japanese War created a basis for many Chinese to perceive the situations through a particular lens, contributing to the making of the "reality" of Americans' scheme to invade and enslave China. On the other, such a "reality" contributed to the reproduction of certain historical narratives concerning experiences and memories of World War II.

These parts of this reciprocal cycle re-enforced one another, re-producing *both* certain images of "reality" and certain kinds of memories of the War against Japan, which in turn formed particular "truth" about "us" and "them." Such a "truth" typically maintained that the United States was about to launch an all-out attack on China from multiple directions such as Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam, and that "we"

⁴⁸ *Changjian Ribao*, November 10, 1950, Jilin University Library Archives, Chunchun, PRC.

⁴⁹ "Diwuquwei, Qu fulian chou weihui deng danwei guanyu Kang Mei Yuan Chao gongzuo de baogao, zhoubao, jianbao [Reports and summaries of the fifth district committee and district women's league etc. concerning the work of the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements]," December 1950, No. 040-002-00123, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

must need to fight against the enemy (Picture 5).⁵⁰ The spread of such a “truth” can be observed even in drawings of children (Picture 6);⁵¹ in the process of constructing what the “world” was, children’s perceptions reflected socio-political environment and popular sentiments at that time.

In this reciprocal cycle of shaping and sharing certain narratives of history and reality, to be sure, the Communist Party exerted enormous power through its censorship, propaganda, and various other campaigns. That is to say, the re-production of memory and “reality” were not a one-man show by the Party. One example of this is the spread of a cartoon from an American magazine, in which American forces appeared about to attack China from three directions of Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam. The story begins with the publication of the cartoon in a hawkish American weekly magazine, *Collier’s*. It was first re-printed on November 20 in Tianjin’s *Jinbu Ribao* (Picture 7), formerly-*Da gong bao*, one of China’s oldest non-partisan newspapers, which had changed its name in late 1949.⁵² It was, then, re-printed again in neighboring regional newspapers, *Henan Ribao* and *Shanxi Ribao*, on November 23. Then, it was re-published in the party organ, *Renmin Ribao* on November 24. Finally, CCP top leader, Premier Zhou Enlai, referred to the cartoon in his talk on November 25, saying:

We don’t need to search for proof of America’s scheme for invasion. Let us look and quote Americans’ own voices. Pictures published in [American] newspapers and magazines can prove this. In all of these pictures, drawings of arrows are all directed toward mainland China, via Taiwan and Vietnam. [...]. In fact, after the outbreak of

⁵⁰ Changjiang Ribao, December 4, 1950; Xian Qunzhong, December 3, 1950.

⁵¹ *Xinhua Ribao* [New China Daily], 11 December 1950; *Shanxi Ribao* [Shanxi Daily], 12 November 1950.

⁵² *Jinbu Ribao*, formerly *Da gong bao* in Tianjin, was one of the oldest, non-partisan daily newspaper in China.

the Korean War, the United States immediately began its invasion of Taiwan and Vietnam.⁵³

It is interesting to note the direction of the movement of this *Collier's* picture. It did not go from central to local; rather it appeared first in Tianjin, then in neighboring local newspapers, and, finally, in the central party organ, with Zhou Enlai's adaptation in his speech.

This story also indicates the malleable and constructed nature of "reality." Beijing's observations, as well as those of the aforementioned local newspapers were, from a historian's hindsight, inaccurate. The Truman administration was concerned about the spread of the war and never seriously considered the idea of war with China, let alone a world war. Furthermore, the picture appeared in *Collier's* was not representative of Washington at all. It was simply an expression of one of many different opinions, and, actually, one of the most hawkish, in American society at that time. And yet, because *Collier's* aggressive stance fit neatly with a dominant Chinese perception of America's motives, its cartoon was picked up and understood as revealing the "real" motives of the United States. Only these hawkish voices seemed to be "real," while dovish voices in America were considered hypocritical (Picture 8). Such a perspective was considered appropriate, intelligent, and realistic in China at that time, even though it was not based on factual information or reliable communications. As historian Akira Iriye correctly points out, "All realities in a way are imagined realities, products of forces and movements that are mediated though

⁵³ Zhou Enlai, November 25, 1950, in *Zhou Enlai nianpu* [A Chronological Record of Zhou Enlai], Vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian, 1999), 111.

human consciousness.”⁵⁴ Socially constructed and historically contingent, such an imagined “reality” in China developed into a particular mode, which was strikingly similar to another imagined “reality” which could be observed in American society at that time—the world of the Cold War, characterized by a bipolar framework.

If a dominant American narrative described China’s entry into the Korean War as part of Moscow’s attack on the West, a growing narrative in China viewed American intervention in Korea as a prelude to America attacking China, as the Japanese had a decade earlier. Thus, one low-ranking communist cadre’s observation did not seem illogical in November 1950: “The war in Korea is expanding. The war is not merely a civil war in Korea; it is a part of a world war that the United States has been pushing forward.”⁵⁵ As such, dominant narratives of the “truth” of the Korean War and that of the postwar world in China and the United States in the fall of 1950 came to converge into similar bipolar conceptions, with different local roots.

A similar bipolar conception began taking root across the Taiwan Strait, with a different basis. As in mainland China and the United States, the politics of truth-making in Taiwan was accompanied by certain elements of imagination based on local and historical contexts. If many Americans viewed China’s entry into the Korean War as a sign of Moscow’s challenge to the West, and if many Chinese perceived American actions as a reoccurrence of the imperial invasions of Asia,

⁵⁴ Akira Iriye, “Culture and International History,” in Michael Hogan and Thomas Peterson, eds., *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 245.

⁵⁵ “Shiqingguanju, Shiwenlian deng danwei de tongzhi guanyu shenqing Kang Mei Yuan Chao de zhiyuanshu [Volunteer applications for the Resisting America and Assisting Korea War written by cadres in units such as the Sanitary Bureau and Transportation Association in Shanghai],” November 1950, No. 001-009-00145, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

many Nationalist party members and sympathizers in Taiwan interpreted the situation in terms of the Chinese Civil War.

Still less than a year after Chiang Kai-shek had evacuated the mainland for Taiwan, an increasingly prevailing narrative claimed that anti-communist battles must be seen not in terms of a war between Taiwan and mainland China, but a struggle between the Chinese people and Russian Imperialism.⁵⁶ China's entry into the Korean War provided, according to this view, a chance for a world war, through which the Nationalist Party would be able to fight back against the Chinese Communist Party and return to the mainland with the support of the United States.⁵⁷ Such a narrative, of course, was only one of many views in a chaotic postwar Taiwanese society; however, through interpreting the meaning of China's entry into the war, this version of "reality" increasingly came to be predominant, marginalizing and silencing various disagreements in Taiwan in the following years, as we will examine in detail in a later chapter.

As in other societies, the ascent of such a particular narrative in Taiwan required the propagation and maintenance of certain myths—or wishes—about, in Taiwan's case, the situation on the mainland. For instance, an internal report in the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of China (Taiwan) argued that, in mainland China, passion for the Communist Party had evaporated, and eagerness for a counteroffensive was ripening. The report, thus, concluded that the strength of guerrilla forces was increasing in rural areas, particularly in southern and

⁵⁶ "Weihe hanjian biwang qinlue bibai," [Why traitors will lose and the invasion will fail] in *Gaizao[Reform]* No. 5 (November 1, 1950), 101-4, Nationalist Party Archives, Taipei, Taiwan.

⁵⁷ "Ru dazhan baofa jike chongfan dalu [If world war explodes, we can return to the mainland]," editorial, *Zhongyang Ribao*, December 10, 1950.

southwestern China, such as Yunnan and Guangxi. Such a view was widely propagated through newspapers. An official party organ, *Zhongyang Ribao*, for example, published articles claiming that there were 1.6 million anti-communist guerrillas in mainland China, and that their countrymen on the mainland were enslaved by the Russian imperialists and waiting to be rescued.⁵⁸ In regard to the Korean War, it was widely told that many Chinese soldiers were forced to participate and, thus, would surrender if U.S./U.N. forces appealed to them under the name of Chiang Kai-shek.⁵⁹

Views of this kind were, to be sure, not altogether lies. As we have seen, a portion of the population too large to be ignored expressed doubts and distrust toward the CCP at that time. And yet, such views were certainly based on exaggeration, throwing light only on particular sets of facts and excluding others, thus contributing to the making of a “truth.” As in mainland China and the United States, a particular “reality” attained predominance only through gaining the acceptance and participation of the population. In other words, thus, only a “reality” that went along with popular imagination could survive and prevail. Official propaganda, of course, had certain effects in a complex process of the shaping of such imagination, but much more forceful was the progress of the war itself and interpretations of it within society, as well as people’s numerous choices and the

⁵⁸ “Anti-communist Guerrilla—1.6 million,” *Zhongyang Ribao*, November 26, 1950; Also, see, “Jianli dalu fanyong zhengquan fangan caoan [A draft for the proposal to establish a political regime to counterattack the mainland],” No. 014-00001-2999A, Xingzheng yuan [Office of Administration], Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan.

⁵⁹ Minutes, Central Reform Meeting on November 1950, No. 6-41-202, Nationalist Party Papers, Hoover Institute, Stanford University, Stanford, California.

degrees of participation. The real function of state propaganda, actually, was not necessarily to create consensus, but to clarify dividing lines within society.

Divide Lines Clarified

With the series of Chinese victories in Korea, the “Resisting America and Assisting Korea” movements continued to be extending in December of 1950. Against this background, countless storekeepers in major cities competed to make donations, many shoemakers declared their intentions to repair soldiers’ shoes for free, rickshaw coolies signed or gave their names for the Patriotic Pledge, and students and workers participated in various kinds of mobilization campaigns, some even volunteering for the army.⁶⁰ These were the people who surprised a tax office clerk in Beijing who, previously, had experienced the perpetual problem of non-payment of overdue taxes in his district, because now taxpayers were organizing themselves and taking initiative in paying taxes.⁶¹ These were people who, as a result, cooperated with the CCP’s mobilization programs. Viewed in this way, CCP’s campaigns were not always forcefully and brutally imposed, but were, to some extent, welcomed and supported by certain portions, if not a majority, of the population.

We can get a glimpse of such a feeling of cooperation and sense of unity in a report compiled by an official of the Beijing Cinema Guild:

⁶⁰ “Beijing shi tanfan kan-Mei yuan-Chao gongzuo jihua zongjie [Planning and summing-up of Beijing street vendors’ activities of Resisting American and Assisting Korea],” No. 022-010-00314, pp. 23-25, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

⁶¹ “Diwu quwei guanyu wuqu kang-Mei yuan-Chao yundong de chubu jihua, zongjie, baokao [The fifth district committee’s planning, summary, and report concerning the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements in the fifth district of Beijing],” 040-002-00119, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

On the morning of December 13, 1950, about seventy elementary school children walked more than three miles to the Beijing Theater from the outskirts of the city, but found not a single free seat when they arrived. For these children fully soaked in sweat, the theater wanted to give them a rest, thus making an announcement to the audience—"These children came from far away but could not find any free seat; can we take care of them, offering seats and letting them take a rest?" As soon as this announcement finished, everyone stood up; some held their children on knees; some offered their seats; and others shared seats. And then, quickly all of these seventy children could sit down. The theater was filled with a warm and kindly air; it was like a big family.⁶²

Aside from such a degree of enthusiasm and mood of cooperation among the people, the most interesting point of this report is the way in which the author illustrated this scene using the metaphor of a "big family." This is because this notion of "family" might help us to understand why so many people participated in the communist campaigns of "Resisting America and Assisting Korea" in the fall of 1950. In fact, the tightening-up of censorship in the news media, escalation of propaganda campaigns, and spread of nationalistic education were not disdained. Rather, they were in many ways *embraced* as means of bringing order, unity, and a sense of national pride to the country, which came to be commonly and proudly proclaimed as *Xin Zhongguo* [New China]. Indeed, without understanding this aspect of "attractiveness," we cannot comprehend the spread and function of the movements at that time.

Nevertheless, as communist authorities were keenly aware, the tide of popular attitudes was still capricious, possibly tilted by the progress of the war in Korea. The situation in the fall of 1950 was chaotic because this period observed, simultaneously, the rapid development of both support and confidence, on the one hand, and doubt and dissatisfaction, on the other. There was undoubtedly a sense of pride in the achievements of the newly established government, but also existed

⁶² Ibid.

was a strong undercurrent of dissatisfaction and apathy.⁶³ First of all, even among supporters, not everyone's sense of patriotism led them to volunteering for the army; many people, especially among the peasants, were eager to join the army because that was the only thing they were accustomed to and good at. Such an attitude was prevalent among low-ranking village officials, who now felt relieved to be released from the "headachy" tasks of economic progress.⁶⁴ According to one internal bulletin from the Shanxi Province, some peasant leaders proudly claimed that they had not learned any new things like economic development, but knew old things like guerrilla warfare very well.⁶⁵

In addition, the spread of the campaigns had created new problems and much confusion. For example, in one village on the outskirts of Beijing, "donations" were literally forced; when one family refused to contribute money, local officials became furious, but, because they could not collect enough donations, anyway, in the end they decided to make a false report in order to fulfill a quota.⁶⁶ Likewise, in a campaign to collect comfort letters to soldiers, members of one local committee duplicated letters in order to inflate their numbers.⁶⁷ Furthermore, in promoting

⁶³ See, for instance, British diplomat's observation in a memorandum, A.A.E. Franklin to Foreign Office, February 24, 1951 in "Extension of power of the ruling Chinese Communists over the political, social and economic life of the whole of China," FO371/92194, BNA, Kew, UK.

⁶⁴ "Liaodong, Liaoxi, Rehe, Heilongjiang deng sheng ge jieceng dui shiju de fanying [Reactions toward the current political situation among various sectors in Liaodong, Liaoxi, Rehe, and Heilongjiang Province]," December 18, 1950, in *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

⁶⁵ "Kang Mei Yuan Chao Bao Jia Wei Guo sheng zhong Chasheng gejie sixiang dongtai [Thought trends in various circles in Cha Province among the voices of the Resisting America and Assisting Korea and Protect Home Defend Country Movements]," December 20, 1950, in *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

⁶⁶ "Shiwei xuanchuanbu guanyu Beijingshi jixu puji shenru Kang Mei Yuan Chao yundong deqingkuang baogao [The propaganda division of Beijing city committee concerning continuing spreading and deepening the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements]," February 13, 1951, No. 001-012-00080, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

anti-American signature campaigns, some lower-ranking officials in local committees in Beijing added false signatures in order to finish the work assigned to them.⁶⁸ In addition to such a variety of mendacious reports, the extension of the movements revealed that quite a significant portion of the population did not support the communist authorities. Some even openly scorned students' activities in the "Resisting America and Assisting Korea" movements; one middle-age worker in Beijing reportedly said:

Who would believe what students say? Ordinary folks would say, 'Ah, what noisy students!' They are not really smart. They quickly appear once something happens, but on the next day they are gone. At the time of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident [in 1937], there were such noisy students, but they quickly knelt down when the Japanese came over. Moreover, many of them still talk like foreigners. I don't understand what they are saying.⁶⁹

Observing such a situation, this report warned that there was a certain distance between student groups enthusiastic about the campaigns and the rest of the masses. Further, as discussed earlier, many sectors of the population remained dubious, and such a situation continued even with the massive extension of the "Resist America and Assist Korea" movements.

As we have seen, some students simply remained pro-American. Even among the waves of anti-American campaigns in December 1950, several high-school students in Beijing reportedly spoke of America with an air of envy, saying, "I have heard that in the United States even a dog eats meat and even a beggar wears suits;" "I have never heard that there is a beggar in America;" "I wish to be an American.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ "Beijingshi diliu quwei ge zhibu youguan Kang Mei Yuan Chao de qunzhong fanying ji xuanchuan zhihuizhan gongzuo jihua [Reports from various branch offices of the sixth district of Beijing concerning people's reactions in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements and the working plans for propaganda]," November 1950, No. 038-001-00023, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

How wonderful it would be if I could cling to the tail of an aircraft and go to the United States!”⁷⁰ Such a sense of envy toward American society indeed could not be ignored; some even observed that ordinary people did not have feelings of hatred toward the United States at all, and that it would be difficult to make them develop such feelings quickly.⁷¹

In addition to such pro-American sentiments, some simply did not believe in China’s victory over American forces, suspecting that the United States must be planning a direct landing, like the Inchon Landing, on the coast of Qingdao or Shanghai.⁷² Further, even amidst the massive waves of campaigns, some youth simply remained indifferent; one student at Yanjing University in Beijing reportedly told to his classmates, who had begun discussing the Korean War issue in class: “Well, let’s talk about it after the exam.” Others similarly remained uncooperative, saying, “It would simply be a waste to use college students as soldiers.”⁷³ Although we have seen the increase of enthusiasm among teachers and students, some remained reluctant and even bewildered. One teacher in a Shanghai, for instance, said with a perplexed air, “When the Nationalist Party ruled this country we taught that the Nationalist Party is good. Since the Communist Party has come, we have

⁷⁰ “Kang Mei Yuan Chao yundong zhong zhongxuesheng de sixiang zhuangkuang [Thought situation among high school students in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements],” December 26, 1950, No. 100-001-00035, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

⁷¹ “Tianjin gejie dui muqian shiju de fanying [Responses in various circles in Tianjin regarding the current political situation],” November 18, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, Hong Kong, PRC.

⁷² “Pingrang jiefang hou Fuzhou, Qingdao gejie yiban sixiang zhuangkuang [The general thought situation in various circles in Fuzhou and Qingdao after the liberation of Pyongyang],” December 23, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

⁷³ “Zai Kang Mei Yuan Chao yundong zhong tuanyuan de sixiang qingkuang [The thought situation among a member of the Communist Youth League in the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements],” November 1950, No. 100-001-00034, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

been teaching that the Communist Party is good. What would we have to say, then, if the Nationalist Party were to come back again?"⁷⁴

Even following the series of Chinese victories in Korea, even amidst massive propaganda campaigns, such reluctance was not wiped out. Much worse, from Beijing's perspective, there remained some portions of the population who retained a firm distrust toward the Communist regime. One internal report, which described popular attitudes and current situations in the Shanxi Province, in fact, took a dim view of the movements' prospects: "On the surface, many people agree with the idea of the 'Resisting America and Assisting Korea' campaigns, but many bear doubts about the future of the war, and the majority is afraid of the American forces in their hearts. Many do not trust our newspapers, always listen to the Nationalist Party's radio programs, and hastily believe in wild rumors, thus remaining unstable. Even in public, there have been a lot of behaviors of boldly abusing the People's Government."⁷⁵ The negative tone of this report was not exaggerated.

We can catch a glimpse of such dissatisfaction among a certain portion of the population in one memorandum, scrawled on a piece of paper, now kept at the Beijing Municipal Archives. The memo recounts a brief conversation between a rickshaw man and his customer, a female doctor. According to this note, their chat went as follows. When the rickshaw came near Beihai Park, the two saw propaganda

⁷⁴ "Zhongguo jiaoyu gonghui Shanghai shi weiyuanhui guanyu Fangming tongzhi zuo de 'Wei baowei zuguo he qingnian ertong xingfu de jianglai er fendou' de baogao [The Shanghai Committee of the Chinese Educational Guild concerning a report on Fang Ming's 'Struggles for the happy future of the youth and children as well as for the defense of our mother country']," December 9, 1950, No. C1-2-121-29, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.

⁷⁵ "Shanxi kan-Mei yuan-Chao yundong zhankai yilai ge jiecheng sixiang dongtai [The general trends of thoughts on the various levels of society following the development of the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movement in Shanxi]," *Neibu cankao*, December 8, 1950, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

cartoons of the “Resisting America and Assisting Korea” campaigns; the doctor said to the puller:

The Communist Party is trying to deceive people by using these ‘Resisting America and Assisting Korea’ cartoons. Now Chiang Kai-shek and the Americans are united in the war. The Russians are now actually chasing and violating women in the northeastern area. Moreover, they took over six power plants there. Today, all men between eighteen and fifty years old are conscripted; on the surface, it is of course called ‘volunteering,’ but in fact it is forced. Alas, China will get nowhere. Mao Zedong must know that Stalin is hoping to ruin China.⁷⁶

When the rickshaw man asked the doctor if the story was really true, she reportedly replied, “I am a northeasterner. I saw it myself.”⁷⁷ This story is interesting not so much for its information in itself, but because it shows the existence of individual observation and judgment, in spite of the massive scale of propaganda campaigns all over China during this period.

Such an individual’s observation appeared unmistakably in a letter sent from one worker at the Beijing Municipal Administration for Cleaning to the local communist office in November of 1950. Interestingly, the letter was entitled, not “*Zhiyuanshu* [letter for enlisting]” but “*Yijianshu* [letter of opinion].” Instead of volunteering for the army, in fact, this young worker expressed his concerns and opinions to the authority. It read:

When I learned about the Korean issue, my understanding was still inaccurate and I was thinking that the Korean War was not deeply relevant to us. Through some study, however, I have realized that such a view was merely a narrow ethnic notion. Now I am not viewing the Korean problem as an isolated issue. I see it as part of American Imperialism, which follows the path of Japanese Imperialism of the past, using Korea as a stepping-stone to invade China, and already realizing it today.

⁷⁶ “Diwu quwei, Qu fulian chouweihui deng danwei guanyu Kang Mei Yuan Chao gongzuo de baogao, zhoubao, jianbao [Reports and summaries of the fifth district committee and women’s league of the district etc. concerning the work of the Resisting America and Assisting Korea campaigns],” No. 040-002-00123, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

Based on this understanding, I am attending the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movement for the defense of our country and people, and for the protection of my own security, peace, and daily life.

Nevertheless, what I have done so far is just to mobilize other people, and I have not thought about my own action. I have a concept of action. But how can I express it? That's a big problem! Ordinary people have participated in the Volunteer Army and gone to Korea.

How about myself?
Also join to the Voluntary Army?
No, I cannot!

My mind was messed up. I don't have such a high level of resolution. I don't have such a sense of self-sacrifice. However continuing to discuss this matter, I cannot overcome my contradiction. [...]. Why cannot I equally carry out the duty that other people of the proletariat have been doing? It's hard for me. It's really painful.⁷⁸

In the latter half of his long letter, this worker declared and promised that he would voluntarily reduce his salary by five percent, and extend his working-hours for one-hour every day. This letter is interesting because it shows not only how news of the Korean War forced even a worker to connect a foreign war with his life and think about his behavior, but also how an individual observed the situation, suffered anxiety, and decided not to join the army, in spite of the massive scale of propaganda campaigns. From the first half of the letter, we can presume that he was a sincere learner and participant, from the CCP's viewpoint. In the second half, however, we can see that he was not an opinion-less robot who just passively followed the party line; he refused to go to war, while choosing to suggest his own actions, in the end, such as reducing his salary and extending his working hours.

These examples suggest that what propaganda campaigns—defined broadly, from censorship to education programs to military strategy—in the fall and winter

⁷⁸ "Yijian shu [Letter of Opinion]," November 8, 1950, in "Shi qingguan ju ... deng danwei de tongzhi guanyu shenqing Kang-Mei Yuan-Chao de zhiyuan shu [Volunteer letters for Resisting America and Assisting Korea written by cadres of the Beijing Municipal Administration for Cleaning]," 001-009-00145, pp. 34-37, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

of 1950 really did was not necessarily to *change* people's minds. As we have seen, while certain portions of the population embraced and participated in the CCP's campaigns, quite a few remained dubious, if not hostile, to CCP rule. Seen in this way, the primary effect of such extensive campaigns, rather, had more to do with *clarifying* where the divide existed in society. Active communist sympathizers became more enthusiastic and aggressive, with devoted students, for instance, staying up all night to write letters to Mao Zedong, some even writing them in blood in order to show their determination. On the other hand, those who had been dubious about the communist regime confirmed their distrust, with some students telling enthusiastic classmates straight out: "Just go to Korea as soon as possible, or I will see your heads at the execution ground when Chiang Kai-shek returns."⁷⁹ As such, the waves of campaigns themselves did not settle confusion. Nor were they able to convince nonconformists. Rather, they brought hidden problems on the surface. To "solve" such disputes in society, more direct, more brutal, and more societal kinds of processes were required—that is, social punishment and suppression among the people on the ground, which took place in the years that followed.

The pattern that appeared in the politics of truth-making in China during the "Resisting America and Assisting Korea" movements in the fall and winter of 1950 is worth looking at. First, all campaigns, to be sure, resulted from officially designed programs, which were quite often top-down and coercive. Throughout the

⁷⁹ "Shanghai dazhong xuexiao xuesheng choumei guannian shangwei wanquan shuli [Anti-American perceptions are not yet well established among college and high school students in Shanghai]," November 28, 1950, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

movements, the CCP's focus was on people's *minds* and their participation. The point at issue was how people saw themselves, their history, and the outside world, and how they behaved accordingly. It was reasonable for the communist party to begin these campaigns in news and film industries, as well as education, literature, and history. Yet, the CCP's propaganda campaign itself was only half-successful because it appealed mostly to those who had already been supportive and sympathetic to their programs.

The real implementation of the campaigns, thus, actually depended on more diverse actors and factors, namely, the existence of numerous devoted followers, and historical memories that provided a logic for those people and CCP programs. This point raises questions about the powerful manipulation of the communist regime. In a sense, the sweeping manner of the extension and materialization of the campaign cannot be understood if we look solely at coercion and control by the communist authority. It was made possible by a significant degree of consent, initiative, and participation by local actors. In other words, the widespread permeation of the campaign was possible only at a crossroads of coercion and willingness, and of mobilization and participation. The primary function of state propaganda, thus, had less to do with forging a consensus than clarifying dividing lines between "us" and "them." The series of points raised here is intriguing, not because such phenomena were unique to China, but because they were quite common, as can be seen even in American society and politics at that time.

Truth-Making Campaigns in the United States

“Why do we fight in such a distant place?” asked a narrator in a film titled *Why Korea?*, which was produced by the Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation in December 1950. Showing unfamiliar images of rice fields and mountains, the narrator asked again, “Why do we fight in Korea, a faraway place we barely know? Why?” Instead of answering this question immediately, however, the film provided a “history” of the recent past, stringing together kaleidoscopic images of the prewar and postwar periods—Japan’s invasion and the Manchurian Incident, Hitler’s and Mussolini’s marches in Europe, parades at the Kremlin, communist expansion in Eastern Europe, as well as East and Southeast Asia, followed by heroic images of the Berlin Airlift. Describing the outbreak of the Korean War as part of Moscow’s worldwide schemes, the film warns that there will be “no more geographical boundaries.” With pictures of Paris, London, New York City, Washington D.C., Chicago, San Francisco, and, finally, Seoul, the film concluded: “Today this is the Korea, but Korea is an example. We are fighting not for geographical borders but for a way of life. If we don’t fight there, we will fight here. We have no other choice.”⁸⁰ This film, *Why Korea?*, was screened in hundreds of theaters nationwide, from New York City and San Francisco to Des Moines, Iowa, and Dulles, Texas, and eventually won the Academy Award for best documentary in 1951.

Many viewers of this film might have recalled Frank Capra’s *Prelude to War*, a masterpiece of wartime propaganda, released during World War II, in May 1942, and, similarly, won the Academy Award that year. There were, however, a couple of important differences. First, unlike Capra’s film, *Why Korea?* produced an

⁸⁰ “Why Korea?” Twenty Century-Fox film, Motion Picture Collection, HSTL, Independence Missouri.

unignorable controversy. While many theaters ran the film, and some enthusiastically did so, quite a few theater owners refused, calling it a “war mongering film.”⁸¹ The Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, for instance, protested the White House, which had authorized and urged theater owners to show the film, insisting on that the government should make another film titled “Why We Should Get Out of Korea.”⁸² The existence of such controversy reveals the contested nature of the “reality” of the Cold War, as well as the malleability of “reality” and “truth.” In fact, while largely accepted at that time, the “truth” that *Why Korea?* provided contained certain preconceptions in American society, rather than the actuality of Korea and East Asia. In other words, such a “reality” does not exist out there, and, thus, has to be boldly addressed, widely shared, and unquestionably supported to maintain the prestigious status of “reality.” Since such a consensus regarding “truth” did not exist, it had to be made, initiating waves of truth-making campaigns in American society. This was the background that necessitated American versions of propaganda and mobilization programs in the Korean War period.

Such truth-making programs, to be sure, were nothing new in the year of 1950. Many similar programs had already been developed as wartime mobilization campaigns during the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration. Most, however, were terminated in the early postwar period due to governmental budget cutting efforts. It was the development of the Korean War that re-energized those programs anew. Immediately following the outbreak of the Korean War, the “Campaign of Truth,”

⁸¹ Letter, Don P. West to John R. Steelman, n.d. 471-B; letter, Charles Niles to John R. Steelman, January 13, 1951, 471-B. HSTL.

⁸² Letter, P. J. Wood to John R. Steelman, January 22, 1951, 471-B. HSTL.

which aimed at “rolling back” Soviet versions of “truth,” obtained financial and institutional support from Congress.⁸³ At the end of 1950, President Harry S. Truman issued an executive order to establish the Federal Civil Defense Administration (FCDA) within the Office for Emergency Management, which was quickly elevated to an independent government agency in the executive branch.⁸⁴

As several historians have examined in detail, this agency played an active role in the years that followed in initiating various propaganda and mobilization campaigns through publishing numerous pamphlets and leaflets, broadcasting various programs, holding diverse exhibits, and even helping to establish a college, National Civil Defense College, at Olney, Maryland, that aimed at instructing citizens various rescue techniques in the nation’s civil defense effort.⁸⁵ Some of the largest and best-known campaigns were, “Operation Skywatch” and “Alert America,” in which, according to a speech by Truman, two million Americans voluntarily participated.⁸⁶ Throughout these campaigns, the FCDA continuously warned that the Soviet Union has atomic bombs and airplanes that could drop those bombs on American cities, urging citizens that every city, factory, office, and home must be prepared and organized for civil defense.⁸⁷

⁸³ Walter Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-1961* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 14-15; Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas, 2006), 43; Marc J. Selverstone, *Constructing the Monolith: The United States, Great Britain, and International Communism, 1945-1950* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 177.

⁸⁴ Guy Oakes, *The Imaginary War: Civil Defense and American Cold War Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 34-38.

⁸⁵ "Invitation to the first public exhibition of the Federal Civil Defense Administration's Rescue Street," Folder "Civil Defense Campaign," Box 6, Spencer R. Quick Files, Staff Member and Office Files, HSTP, HSTL, Independence, Missouri.

⁸⁶ "Statement by the President on the First Anniversary of Civil Defense," January 12, 1952, Folder "Feb. 1951-1953," Box 1671, OF1591, HSTP, HSTL, Independence, Missouri.

⁸⁷ "Federal Civil Defense Administration Press Information," No. 120, June 21, 1951, in memorandum

Many Americans, probably, did not need to hear such an instruction from the government. In the fall of 1950, many had already gone ahead with their own motivations and purposes. For example, the aforementioned film, *Why Korea?*, was, in fact, designed and produced at the initiative of a private corporation, Twenty Century-Fox, in contrast to Capra's *Prelude to War*, produced with the commission and support of General George Marshall and the then-War Department. In addition to such corporate support, many individuals engaged in various kinds of social mobilization and civil defense efforts. A Houston housewife, for instance, took pen in hand and sent a letter to Secretary of Defense George Marshall to report the lack of mobilization efforts in her neighborhood, telling him that she was ready to find the housewife's place in the atomic bomb defense plan, and asking what she could do to this purpose.⁸⁸ A New York car dealer, on the other hand, found a business opportunity in civil defense programs, and developed an ambulance trailer-truck, designed for the use by civil defense agencies, which, according to his proposal, could be used as a small auditorium-lecture room, as well as an emergency and operation room.⁸⁹

Still others, particularly those with military experience, sought opportunities to be recognized in their communities by emphasizing the need for voluntary civil defense programs at home. A veteran living in a rural community, one hundred miles north of New York City, for instance, wrote the White House:

from John T. Gibson to Irving Perlmeter, June 23, 1951, Folder "Miscellaneous, 1945-50," Box 1743, OF 2965, HSTP, HSTL, Independence, Missouri.

⁸⁸ Laura McEnaney, *Civil Defense Begins at Home: Militarization Meets Everyday Life in the Fifties* (Princeton, 2000), 88.

⁸⁹ Letter, Frank Dale to HST, January 17, 1951, Folder "1945-Jan. 1951," Box 1671, OF1591, HSTP, HSTL, Independence, Missouri.

There are too many men in this land with excellent military experience who are forced to stand on the side-lines of war, helpless to assist because of age, infirmities and lack of up-to-the-minute training. [...]. They all want to be identified as being active in the defense of their country, but not on an “air raid warden” basis. [...] I know that our defense potential can be greatly increased if these veterans are asked to serve and if they are given recognition of a sort for a specialized type of defense work.⁹⁰

Responding to the army official’s request, the man enthusiastically introduced his own plan for organizing and defending his community, envisioning active roles for “citizen soldiers,” who would work 8 hours per day at their regular civilian jobs and serve 12 hours at night for their country—including 4 hours on active duty for air interceptor defense, and 8 hours to rest on reserve at a local headquarters—which would enable citizens, the man conceived, to carry on both civilian and military duties.⁹¹

Unfortunately for this man, neither the White House nor the Army adopted his plan. Nevertheless, his basic idea was not far out of step with the core ethos of civil defense ideology: individuals voluntarily serving the state, as epitomized in a pamphlet drawing (Picture 9), illustrating society as a pyramid structure, composed by individuals, families, neighborhoods, communities, cities, states, and the federal government, in that order. As we will examine in a later chapter, such a strong desire for “orderly” society was the underlying theme of civil defense and propaganda programs, which were quite often favorably embraced not only by policymakers, but also numerous everyday people in society.

⁹⁰ Letter, Richard J. Kennedy to Gen. Harry H. Vaughan, August 8, 1950, Folder “1945-Jan. 1951,” Box 1671, OF1591, HSTP, HSTL, Independence, Missouri.

⁹¹ Letter, Richard J. Kennedy to Gen. Harry H. Vaughan, September 6, 1950, Folder “1945-Jan. 1951,” Box 1671, OF1591, HSTP, HSTL, Independence, Missouri.

Observing such popular support and participation in these programs, one would notice an interesting point in common: the lack of mention of the Chinese and Korean people. This was also true for the aforementioned Twenty Century-Fox film, *Why Korea?*. Frank Capra's masterpieces of propaganda, such as *Prelude to War* and *Know Your Enemy*, depict the Japanese and the Nazis as primary enemies from beginning to end, however clichéd and stereotypical the descriptions were. To the contrary, *Why Korea?* barely shows Koreans at all, regardless of North or South. Nor did the Chinese appear in the film. Except for a few shots of refugee, the Korean people were almost completely absent from the film. Why? It was because the outbreak of the Korean War and the Chinese intervention were considered merely results of the Kremlin's worldwide scheme, signs of the beginning of World War III, which, for many, provided concrete "evidence" that supposedly proved the validity of the Cold War.

"World War III is Here Now"

Following news of China's entry into the Korean War, widespread in American society in December of 1950 was amplified fear and rumors of World War III—particularly of already losing it.⁹² "I've had conference after conference on the jittery situation facing the country," wrote President Truman in his journal on December 9, 1950, "I've worked for peace for five years and six months, and it looks like World War III is here. I hope not—but we must meet whatever comes and we

⁹² For instance, see, "World War III, Phase I: Soviet Ahead," *US News & World Report*, November 24, 1950.

will.”⁹³ Like many Americans, the president had just learned that the Pyongyang area had fallen into enemy’s hands, and that U.S. forces were completely outnumbered in Korea. General Douglas MacArthur’s cable had informed him that the number of Chinese soldiers was estimated at 300,000, while that of U.S. troops was merely 135,000.⁹⁴

Sharing in this view, one American military official wrote to a friend in mid-December: “We must recognize publicly that World War III is here now. We must take all appropriate action to win; universal war service, industrial mobilization, the build-up of not only American forces but also the forces of Nationalist China, of Japan, of Free Korea, of Germany, and Franco’s Spain.”⁹⁵ For MacArthur, World War III might have already been a “reality;” the general urged Washington to take aggressive action against mainland China, advocating a blockade of the coast of China, an attack on China’s industrial capacity to wage war, and the use of Chiang Kai-shek’s armies in the war in Korea and, possibly, in mainland China.⁹⁶

While not giving in to MacArthur’s demands, on December 15, President Truman, with a similar sense of crisis, made a declaration of national emergency by radio. It is worthwhile to pay attention to the ways in which the president gave meaning to various events. He said:

⁹³ Harry S. Truman, Long Hand Note File, December 9, 1950, Box 281, President’s Secretary File, HSTL, Independence, Missouri.

⁹⁴ “Minutes of the Meeting of the President with Congressional Leaders, 11 am, Friday, in the White House,” December 1, 1950, Folder “Attlee Meeting - December 1950,” Box 149, Foreign Affairs File, Subject File, President’s Secretary’s Files, HSRP, HSTL, Independence, Missouri.

⁹⁵ Letter, Carter Clarke to Bonner Fellers, December 18, 1950, Folder 9, Box 1, Papers of Bonner F. Fellers (hereafter PBFF), MMA, Norfolk, Virginia.

⁹⁶ Correspondent, Douglas MacArthur to the Joint Chief of Staffs, December 30, 1950, Folder 11, Box 1, PDM, MMA, Norfolk, Virginia.

I am talking to you tonight about what our country is up against, and what we are going to do about it. Our homes, our Nation, all the things we believe in, are in great danger. This danger has been created by the rulers of the Soviet Union. [...] In June, the forces of communist imperialism broke out into open warfare in Korea. [...] Then, in November, the communists threw their Chinese armies into the battle against the free nation. By this act, they have shown that they are now willing to push the world to the brink of a general war to get what they want. This is the real meaning of the events that have been taking place in Korea. This is why we are in such grave danger.⁹⁷

By connecting several events with one thread of “communist imperialism,” instead of treating them case by case, the president highlighted and authorized some particular facts as more meaningful than others. Such a grand narrative, of course, was not Truman’s creation; it was simply a repetition of an already-familiar story. Yet, in the development of the so-called Cold War, it was not particular “origins” that generated and led to the formation of such a world. Rather, it was *repetitions* that consolidated the logic and eventually the world of the Cold War, while silencing and marginalizing various oppositional viewpoints.

In this version of “reality,” Moscow’s intentions and abilities were often overestimated; it was believed to be controlling China, North Korea, as well as all communists and “pinks” in American society. Sharing this widespread perspective, the head of a Christian organization in California sent a long letter to his Senator, William Knowland, asserting that North Korea’s attack was made through the manipulation of Stalin, that the Chinese Communist Party was also without a doubt

⁹⁷ Press release, President Harry S. Truman’s Speech, December 15, 1950, Folder “Korea,” Box 1304, OF471, HSTP, HSTL, Independence, Missouri; Dean Acheson, likewise, made similar logic several times in the NSC meeting and the cabinet meeting on November 28, as well as the President’s meeting with congressional leaders on December 13. See, FRUS: Vol. 7: Korea, 1242-49; “Minutes of Cabinet Meeting, 4:20pm, Tuesday, at the White House,” Folder “Attlee Meeting - December 1950,” Box 149, Foreign Affairs File, Subject File, President’s Secretary’s Files, HSTP, HSTL, Independence, Missouri; and “Minutes of the Meeting of the President with Congressional Leaders, 10:00 am, Wednesday, at the White House,” December 13, 1950, Folder “Attlee Meeting - December 1950,” Box 149, Foreign Affairs File, Subject File, President’s Secretary’s Files, HSTP, HSTL, Independence, Missouri.

under the control of Moscow, and that the Kremlin was hoping to break up American society via networks of communist agents living in the United States. He concluded: "Russia plans a controlled, deliberate provocation of America, chopping at us with small but steady internal blows when possible, throwing blocks at us with her satellites, all the time readying her forces for that day when it may be necessary to strike."⁹⁸

Like this letter, masses of speculation on the Kremlin's intentions circulated widely following China's entry, in contrast to a relatively small amount of conjecture about Beijing's intentions. For many, Beijing's intentions did not really matter; what mattered were those of the Kremlin. Some thought that the Russians' aim was the occupation of Japan, and others believed that the entire campaign in Korea and East Asia was a large-scale feint operation to distract attention from Europe; the ultimate design, this thesis maintained, must be the occupation of Western Europe.⁹⁹

Based on such a perceived imagined-reality of World War III, the winter of 1950 witnessed the escalation of fears and rumors of war, which led some toward extremism. A man from Plainfield, New Jersey, for instance, urged President Truman: "Please pour Atom-bombs on Russia before they do it to us some bright Holiday Morning! [...] Please mobirize [*sic*] completely!" In a similar tone, a man from Santa Barbara, California, wrote to Senator William Knowland, who already had been known for his "tough" stance: ¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Letter, John Brogen to William Knowland, October 12, 1950, Box 272, Papers of William Knowland (hereafter PWK), UC Berkeley Bancroft Library, Berkeley, California.

⁹⁹ Letter, Walter Judd to McKinley, August 17, 1950, Box 38, Papers of Walter Judd (hereafter PWJ), Hoover Institute Archives, Stanford University, California. It is important to note that such an attitude was commonplace; see, for example, Margaret Higgins, *War in Korea* (1951), 215.

¹⁰⁰ Letter, Harolds Bisbee to Harry S. Truman, December 16, 1950, Box 1307, Official File 471B, HSTL,

Your suggestion that we drop a few [atomic] bombs upon Manchuria is a good one, this action should have been taken long ago. Why we must always, like cornered rats, have to fight for survival, why do we lack the guts to carry the battle to the enemy? Like every liberty loving American citizen I want to see out fighting men given a chance for their lives, it is time for our Chiefs of Staff to give the green light to General MacArthur and permit him to carry the battle into the enemy's sources of supply, in this case, Manchuria. We are always so damn ethical, so afraid of hurting our actual and potential foes, that our boys are sacrificed upon the altars of timidity and stupidity.¹⁰¹

These opinions were, to be sure, some of the most strenuous hard-lines, but they were not minor opinions. Many political figures and government officials were keenly aware of such fears of World War III, continuously making adjustments to their postures and taking aggressive stances.

In a meeting between the president and several congressmen, for instance, Colorado Republican Eugene Donald Millikin expressed his irritation in a similar tone: "Nobody abroad would be scared by anything we did unless we had 'massive' strength. Just issuing a declaration [of national emergency] wouldn't scare anybody abroad unless we had an army to go along with it." Pounding the table with his fist, the Senator concluded, "We ought to make ourselves as strong as possible as fast as possible."¹⁰² Keeping step, Charles A. Eaton, Republican Congressman from New Jersey and Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, escalated the tone of his critique, saying: "There [is] only one thing to do: to strip off our peace clothes and to show our muscle to the world. This [will] not slow down the Russians

Independence, Missouri.

¹⁰¹ Letter, L. W. Neustadter to William Knowland, Box 242, WKP, UC Berkeley Bancroft Library, Berkeley, California.

¹⁰² Eugene Donald Millikin's comments in "Meeting of the President with Congressional Leaders in the Cabinet Room," December 13, 1950, Folder 3, SF No. 44, HSTL, Independence, Missouri.

because they are determined to destroy us but it [will] make it clear to the rest of the world that we [are] determined to stop them and we are going to stop them.”¹⁰³

Such a hawkish tone was not limited to Republicans. Democratic Senator from Maryland, Millard Tydings, who had recently lost his senatorial election primarily because he was labeled as being too soft on communism, similarly adapted the toughest attitude. He said: The United States is in deadly peril. The question now is whether we can survive. [...]. The war in Korea has shown us how weak we are, and how strong the enemy is. The war in Korea has shown us how well-equipped communist troops are and how well they can fight. We still have some time left, but damn little.¹⁰⁴ The grave tone was unmistakable. No wonder that, at that time, some people grew worried about the end of the world every time they saw and heard thunder and lightning.¹⁰⁵ It was such prevalent fears of World War III that impelled many Americans to support and take part in various kinds of mobilization and civil defense programs.

Yet, another question remains: Why did such a particular version of “reality” become prevalent in American society in the fall of 1950? The cornerstone of the fear and prospect of World War III was the assumption that the Chinese and North Koreans were acting on behalf of Moscow’s global scheme. After all, if North Korean and Chinese actions were viewed as built on their own decisions, the logic of World War III could not have been maintained. In fact, as we have seen in earlier chapters,

¹⁰³ “Meeting with the President with Congressional Leaders,” December 13, 1950, Papers of Harry S. Truman (hereafter PHST), Student File 44, Folder 3, Harry S. Truman Library (HSTL), Independence, Missouri.

¹⁰⁴ Millard Tydings, comments in a meeting on December 13, 1950. Folder 3, SF No. 44, HSTL, Independence, Missouri.

¹⁰⁵ John Kenneth White, *Still Seeing Red: How the Cold War Shapes the New American Politics* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 4.

the socialist camp did not have a monolithic unity, in terms of relationships and decision-making regarding the Korean War. Thus, the questions are: Why did so many people believe in such worldview? What was the basis for that understanding of the world?

Prejudice Masquerading as Facts

It is worthwhile to recall how Chinese intervention was perceived at the outset. General Douglas MacArthur described the situation as he perceived it on December 3, 1950, as follows: "We are in an entirely new war against an entirely new power of great military strength and under entirely new conditions."¹⁰⁶

Receiving disturbing news from Tokyo, President Truman lamented as such:

"Unfortunately for us, the Chinese Communists had entered Korea without any provocation and they had come in for the purpose of driving out General MacArthur's forces."¹⁰⁷ By mid-December, the news of China's entry had been widely acknowledged at home, inciting rampant criticism of the Truman administration's complete failure to predict China's decision.¹⁰⁸ Thus, it is understandable for MacArthur and Truman to emphasize the newness and abruptness of the situation, in view of their misjudgment in promising the public

¹⁰⁶ Memorandum, MacArthur to Joint Chief of Staff, December 3, 1950, File 11 Box 1, RG6, Papers of Douglas MacArthur (hereafter PDM), MacArthur Memorial Archives(hereafter MMA), Norfolk, Virginia.

¹⁰⁷ Note of the President's Meeting with Congressional Leaders, December 13, 1950, Folder 3, Student File (hereafter SF) No. 44, Harry S. Truman Library (hereafter HSTL), Independence, Missouri.

¹⁰⁸ Notes of the President's Meeting with Congressional Leaders on December 1, 1950, Folder 3, SF No. 44, HSTL. Also see "Research Data of the Chinese Communist Potential For Intervention in the Korean War," which includes many columns and editorials written by Drew Pearson and Alsop brothers among others; Folder 1, Box 14, RG 23, Papers of Charles A. Willoughby (hereafter PCAW), MMA, Norfolk, Virginia.

that China would not attack and that the war would be over by Christmas of that year.

Looking closely, however, the situation was not really as “new” as MacArthur asserted, nor was China’s intervention “without any provocation” as Truman alleged. As a matter of fact, Beijing had issued warnings repeatedly.¹⁰⁹ Intelligence reports warning of China’s moves had arrived in Tokyo and Washington.¹¹⁰ The British and French governments had conveyed their concerns about it to the Truman administration, as well.¹¹¹ However, these warnings were not taken seriously. Premier Zhou Enlai’s warning was simply ignored as a bluff.¹¹² Intelligence reports calling for caution were dismissed as containing “no firm evidence.”¹¹³ Much worse, such information was altered upon arrival at MacArthur’s ears, because he did not like to hear reports that differed from his conviction that China would never intervene.¹¹⁴ A self-appointed authority on “Oriental psychology,” MacArthur *knew* that Asians were “obedient, dutiful, child-like, and quick to follow resolute leadership.”¹¹⁵ Holding such preconceptions about “Asians,” the general remained

¹⁰⁹ Shi Zhe, *Zai lishi juren shenbian: Shi Zhe huiyi lu* (Beijing: Zhong ang wenxian chubanshe, 1991) 492-493; William J Sebald, *With MacArthur in Japan: A Personal History of the Occupation* (New York, 1965), 173; Chen Jian, *China’s Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation* (New York, 1994), 169.

¹¹⁰ “Research Data of the Chinese Communist Potential For Intervention in the Korean War,” PCAW, MMA; Also, see Willoughby’s Memorandum, “Brief of ‘Trends of High Level Washington Estimates on Chinese Communist Intervention in Korea,’” Willoughby to MacArthur, February 23, 1951, Folder 11, Box 1, PDM, MMA.

¹¹¹ William Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History* (Princeton, 1995), 91-96.

¹¹² Sebald, *With MacArthur in Japan*, 173; Chen Jian, *China’s Road to the Korean War*, 169-171.

¹¹³ Charles A. Willoughby, “Brief of ‘Trends of High Level Washington Estimates on Chinese Communist Intervention in Korea,’” PDM, MMA.

¹¹⁴ David Halberstam, *The Coldest Winter: America and the Korean War* (New York, 2007), 370-80. Halberstam bitterly criticizes Willoughby of accommodating himself to MacArthur’s wishes.

¹¹⁵ Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War: The Roaring of the Cataract* (Princeton, 1990), 97. MacArthur, in fact, enjoyed talking about the “Oriental psychology,” which, he believed, fundamentally different from the Western ideas. For example, he talked about it in length with Averell Harriman in early August 1950, telling him that Orientals would not hate to die; MacArthur

reluctant to publicly accept China's full entry as late as December 1950, showing a clear contrast to Chiang Kai-shek who wrote in his diaries in late October that China's full intervention was "without a doubt."¹¹⁶ In a sense, it was not a lack of information, but more a common prejudice concerning "China" and "Asians" that hindered policymakers in Tokyo and Washington in connecting pieces of information that would have suggested China's actions.

Intriguingly, the pattern that appeared in the fall of 1950 was strikingly similar to that observed during the Pacific War in the early 1940s. As historian John Dower reveals, Japan, before World War II, was not considered a military threat. Many Americans *knew* that the Japanese could neither shoot, sail, nor fly because it was believed and "scientifically" proven that they had poor sight. Likewise, the high performance of Japan's fighter plane—the Zero—was actually reported before Pearl Harbor but simply ignored. In Dower's words, "prejudice masqueraded as facts."¹¹⁷ Then, at the time of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor and the Philippines, MacArthur first refused to believe that the Japanese were responsible, insisting that there must have been "white mercenaries." Such a reaction was not just MacArthur's. During

explained, "They die quietly, folding their arms as a dove folding his wings, relaxing and dying." See, Averell Harriman, "Trip to Korea," Box 305, Papers of Averell Harriman (hereafter PAH), Library of Congress (hereafter LC), Washington DC.

¹¹⁶ Chiang Kai-shek Diaries, Folder 11, Box 48, Hoover Institution Archives [hereafter HIA], Stanford University [hereafter SU], Stanford, California. Like MacArthur, White House Press Secretary, Charles G. Ross, told Eben Ayers on November 7, 1950, that he could not determine whether the appearance of Chinese Communist troops in North Korea represented "a full-scale attack or merely an effort on the part of the Chinese to protect utilities along the border." See Eben Ayers, *Truman in the White House: The Diary of Eben A. Ayers* (Columbia, MO, 1991), 380.

¹¹⁷ John Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York, 1986), 99-104.

the war, a common rumor maintained: “German experts are directing the Jap artillery.”¹¹⁸

At the time of the Korean War in 1950, a similar pattern emerged. As Harold Isaacs’ classic study describes, the Chinese had been widely thought to be “hopelessly backward and incapable of marshaling a military power”—a nineteenth-century idea which had been rampant in the United States.¹¹⁹ Isaacs’ study found that typical terms often associated with the “Chinese” at that time were: “inert,” “submissive,” “servile,” “slow,” “illiterate,” “superstitious,” “ignorant,” and so on.¹²⁰ One publisher in the Midwest told an interviewer: “I never thought of the Chinese as belligerent. I never thought we would be risking war with them. A peasant country! It would have been inconceivable to me even five or ten years ago that we could have a war with China.”¹²¹

Such an attitude was not necessarily a result of individual traits but of social construction. As a matter of fact, leading officials, such as Dean Acheson, George F. Kennan, and the president himself shared a similar view. Kennan, for example, tended to lump the peoples of Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America together as “impulsive, fanatical, ignorant, lazy, unhappy, and prone to mental disorders and other biological deficiencies”—a surprisingly mediocre preconception for the peerless intelligent diplomat.¹²² Feelings of surprise many Americans had in facing China’s entry into the Korean War did not really from it truly coming from out

¹¹⁸ John Dower, *War Without Mercy*, 102, 105-6.

¹¹⁹ Harold Isaacs, *Scratches on Our Minds* (New York, 1958), 237; T. Christopher Jespersen, *American Images of China, 1931-1949* (Stanford, 1996).

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, 97-99.

¹²¹ *Ibid*, 238.

¹²² See Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line* (Cambridge, 2001), 48-53; and Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and US Foreign Policy* (New Haven, 1987), 162-63.

of the blue; it simply did not fit well with existing, dominant preconceptions about the Chinese.

After China's intervention became undeniable, conventional images of China had to be modified. Yet, this change did not occur as revision and reconsideration of conventional images of China and the Chinese, but merely as extension and adjustment of them. An example of this is the predominant understanding of China as a tool of the Soviet Union. At the time of China's entry into the Korean War, Beijing was rarely seen as a decision-maker; it was widely supposed that the attack was made under the order and support of Moscow. It is worthwhile to think about how such a view was premised on existing prejudice toward the Chinese. For example, one interviewee in Isaacs' research, who later became a high official in the Eisenhower administration recollected:

I was brought up to think [that] the Chinese couldn't handle a machine. Now, suddenly, the Chinese are flying jets! The American idea was that Asiatics are nonmechanical, except the Japanese, and the Japanese were freaks, not really mechanical, just copied what others did. In practically everything one ever read...the Asiatic is always plowing with his fingernails and the European is handling the machine. Now the Chinese is flying jets! Disturbing, especially since you have several hundred million of them teamed up with the USSR. I always thought the Yellow Peril business is nonsense... Now I can visualize that Asiatics teamed up with the Slavs could indeed conquer the world!¹²³

In a similar tone, *Life* asserted, "China's Red Army, a guerrilla rabble 20 years ago, had been built into a menacingly Russianized fighting force."¹²⁴ An underlying belief was that the Chinese could not have done so by themselves. They were merely "rabble" who could not fly jets by themselves.

¹²³ Ibid, 226-27.

¹²⁴ "Aggressive China Becomes a Menace," *Life*, November 20, 1950.

To make sense of this drastic change, instead of considering the revision of prejudice, a new common narrative claimed the following: there must have been significant support or a push from a foreign power—the Russians.¹²⁵ This modified common sense in the United States maintained that the Kremlin forced and supported China in entering Korea on behalf of the Soviet Union—an idea that matched perfectly with existing “knowledge” in the United States of the global cold war, however misleading it was.

One good example of this perspective is a fake “translation” of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance and an image of it (Picture 10) that began circulating in the summer of 1950. While versions of speculations existed, such a “translation” typically maintained that China permitted Soviet troops to be stationed in China; that Beijing agreed to place the Chinese People’s Liberation Army under direct Soviet command to be turned into an International Communist Army; that China also agreed to provide ten million laborers to the USSR, and so on.¹²⁶ None of this was true.¹²⁷ These items reflected, more than anything else, conventional American views of China as a colonized country, as a tool of the Soviet Union, and as a place with a large number of submissive physical workers.

A similar point can be found in American propaganda used in the Korean War, which reflected more about drawers’ perspective and prejudice than actual situations, depicting Korean and Chinese as subordinates (Picture 11). Such a

¹²⁵ Iriye Akira, *Bei-Chu kankei no imeji [Images in American-Sino Relations]* (Tokyo, 2002 [1971]), 223-4.

¹²⁶ Letter, American China Policy Association to editors of various magazines, Box 11, Papers of Raymond Feely [hereafter PRF], Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University, Stanford, California.

¹²⁷ For details of the Sino-Soviet relations and the treaty, see, for example, Odd Arne Westad, *Brothers in Arms: The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1945-1963* (Stanford, 1998); Chen Jian, “The Sino-Soviet Alliance and China’s Entry into the Korean War,” *CWIHP Working Paper* No. 1 (1992).

projection of domestic images of China over “reality” was nothing new phenomenon; as historian T. Christopher Jespersen observes in his study of American perceptions of China between the 1930s and 1940s, “[American] images and conceptions of China have been [...] more the product of domestic forces than the result of anything else.”¹²⁸ However twisted it was, once accepted and took roots among the population, such a domestic perspective was no longer imagination; it became “reality.”

Policymakers in Washington reflected such socially constructed worldview. John Foster Dulles, for example, personally warned Truman that: “Developments in Asia confirm that there is a comprehensive program, in which the Soviet and Chinese communists are cooperating.”¹²⁹ Assistant Secretary Dean Rusk was more brazen: “The Peiping [Beijing] regime may be a colonial Russian government—a Slavic Manchukuo on a larger scale. It is not the Government of China. [...]. It is not Chinese.”¹³⁰ The assumption in Rusk’s comment is based on the common preconception that China was a passive, colonized country, and that what was happening in China was, therefore, remote from the will of the Chinese people.

The tendency to separate the Beijing government and the Chinese people was common not just among mainstream policymakers but also among leftists, who voiced their dislike of the corrupted Chiang Kai-shek government and sympathies

¹²⁸ T. Christopher Jespersen, *American Images of China*, 188.

¹²⁹ What is important about Dulles’ view is not its uniqueness but its commonness. President of the University of Washington Raymond Allen, for example, used almost identical words in a letter to the President. He wrote, “It is now apparent that the Kremlin and their Chinese Communists Allies are determined to achieve their ambitions in Eastern Asia—the conquest of Japan and Southeast Asia—even at the risk of general war.” Letter, Raymond Allen to HST, November 29, 1950, Box 1306, OF 471B, HSTL, Independence, Missouri.

¹³⁰ “Editorial Note on conversations between Dean Rusk and John Foster Dulles,” May 18, 1951. *FRUS 1950, Vol. 7: Korea and China, Part 2*, 1671-72.

with the Chinese people. Henry A. Wallace, who had just resigned from the presidency of the Progressive Party, for example, viewed Beijing as a satellite regime of Moscow and stated: “The danger we face today comes from the common man of Asia and Russia falling into the hands of men who are determined to dominate the world,” Wallace continued, “Ninety nine percent of the Chinese people are not communistic in any but the most superficial sense.”¹³¹ While sympathetic at a glance, Wallace’s attitude was that of mingled paternalism and contempt, totally dismissing proactive agency on the side of the Chinese people. In a sense, this was another form of maintaining conventional views on passive, weak, and miserable images of the Chinese.

Wallace’s view was actually another prevalent image of “reality:” that is, millions of Chinese captured by a handful of communists (Picture 12). As political cartoons in the *Saturday Evening Post* depicted, a peasant-like Chinese slave in chains was threatened by a communist with a rifle.¹³² It is worth paying attention to how conventional prejudice toward the Chinese endured; the foreign, communist “Mao Tse-tung” was depicted as small but aggressive, while the “Captive Millions” of the Chinese were illustrated as gigantic but weak, miserable, and passive—a stereotypical image of the Chinese who were in need of help. In contrasting Mao and the captive Chinese people in terms of size, this cartoon conveyed a message that the majority of the Chinese had simply fallen into the hands of a handful of communists against their will.

¹³¹ Letter, Henry A. Wallace to Jimmy Jemail, December 16, 1950, Box 38, Series III, Papers of Henry A. Wallace (hereafter PHAW), University of Iowa (hereafter IU), Iowa City, Iowa; Henry A. Wallace, Speech on January 21, 1951, Box 77, Series X, PHAW, IU, Iowa City, Iowa.

¹³² *Saturday Evening Post*, December 16, 1950.

Many believed this, and some advocated for the need to support counterrevolutionary movements. A man in Colorado, for instance, said, "There is much unrest in Russia. There is in every satellite country an intense dislike for Russia if they could only voice the dislike. Why haven't we cooperated with their underground? (This includes China). Why don't we use the people of the underground and resistance movement?"¹³³ The assumption here was that the large majority of the people in communist-governed areas was not in support of their governments, and that they would revolt against communists and welcome Americans once the U.S. seriously supported them.

To be sure, these images of "reality" were not entirely mistaken. In fact, as we have seen, counterrevolutionary action was still active in China, and the legitimacy of the communist government was not yet consolidated.¹³⁴ For millions of Chinese who were suppressed and forced to evacuate from the mainland, the image of "Captive Millions" indeed represented reality. That said, these "facts" themselves cannot explain other kinds of "facts," such as enthusiastic popular support for social change, as well as for anti-colonial nationalism, among millions of Chinese, through which the Chinese Communist Party gained popularity.¹³⁵ By the same token, Beijing and Moscow certainly maintained close contact regarding the Korean War.¹³⁶ Yet,

¹³³ Letter, LaVere Roelfs to Averell Harriman, November 21, 1950, Box 309, PAH, Library of Congress.

¹³⁴ See, for instance, Jeremy Brown and Paul Pickowicz, *Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of The People's Republic of China* (Cambridge, 2007) and Bai Xi, *Kaiguo dazhenfan [Great Suppressions at the Time of Establishing Country]* (Beijing, 2006).

¹³⁵ See, for instance, Maurice Meisner, *Mao's China and After* (New York, 1999 [1977]) and Elizabeth Perry, "Reclaiming the Chinese Revolution," *Journal of Asian Studies* (2008), 67: 1147-64.

¹³⁶ For the studies of close contacts among Moscow, Beijing, and Pyongyang, see, for instance, Kathryn Weathersby, "'Should We Fear This?' Stalin and the Danger of War with America" Working Paper No. 39, Cold War International History Project, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, July 2002; Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshekov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From*

this “fact” itself does not mean that Beijing entered the war under Moscow’s orders; as several scholars have pointed out, and as we have seen in the previous chapter, the Beijing leadership’s personal characteristics, as well as Chinese domestic contexts, were much more vital factors in the Beijing’s decision to enter the Korean War.¹³⁷

Yet, at the time of the Korean War, the logic of Moscow controlling Beijing and Pyongyang was “obvious” enough for further discussion, at least from the dominant American perspective, so that some people expressed wonder, if not irritation, at why others did not see this “reality” of the world and act accordingly. One military officer lamented: “If [other countries] are really aligned with us in ‘putting a stop to aggression’—which is an actual threat to all alike—Why in hell do they not come in, contribute their share to the common cause?”¹³⁸

Irritation of this kind was not considered hysterical, panicky, or aggressive. This was so because such irritation was considered legitimate, in view of the Cold War logic at that time. The world, according to this view, should have been more closely united together, as a cartoon in the *Kansas City Star* wished for (Picture 13).¹³⁹ While such a desire itself was actually based on domestic and historical preconceptions—more straightforwardly, prejudice—in American society, it

Stalin to Khrushchev (Cambridge, 1996); and Sergei Goncharov, John Lewis, and Xue Litai, *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War* (Stanford, 1993), among others.

¹³⁷ For the studies of Chinese context and aspect, see, for instance, Chen Jian, *China’s Road to the Korean War* (New York, 1994); Shu Kenei, *Mo Takuto no Chosen Senso [Mao Zedong’s Korean War]* (Tokyo, 1991); Niu Jun, *Reisen-ki Chugoku gaiko no seisaku kettei [China’s Foreign Policy Decision Making during the Cold War]* (Tokyo, 2007); Yang Kuisong, *Mao Zedong yu Mosike de en en yuan yuan [Mao Zedong’s Indebtedness and Bitterness toward Moscow]* (Nanchang, 1999); Jeremy Brown and Paul Pickowicz, *Dilemmas of Victory*.

¹³⁸ Letter, Carter Clarke to Bonner Fellers, April 30, 1951, Folder 9, Box 1, RG44a, PBFF, MML, Norfolk, Virginia.

¹³⁹ “If There Ever Was a Time for the Free World to Rally!” *Kansas City Star*, December 16, 1950.

appeared as natural, realistic, and even defensive in the light of a particular version of “reality” of the world at that time.

Quite a few people, of course, did not agree, namely leftists and foreigners. Not sharing popular versions of “common sense,” some leftists viewed the situation differently. Fred Stover, President of the Iowa Farmers Union, for instance, observed that anti-communist hysteria in America was becoming completely ridiculous. He sarcastically observed: “Americans are trying so hard now a days to be different from Russia and communists in every way that it shouldn’t surprise us if a lot of Americans develop such a case of neurosis that they will become nudists simply because they found out that communists wear clothes.”¹⁴⁰ Like Stover, foreign observers who did not share in this “reality” and “common sense” grew concerned about aggressive attitudes in the United States. Anti-communist socialist Thomas Norman, who traveled to India in the spring of 1951, for instance, reported that he read and heard considerable criticism of American “war hysteria,” and that there was much fear of America as a “war monger.”¹⁴¹ Observing the hardening of popular attitudes and politicians’ tones in the United States, by December 1950, even America’s allies were becoming uneasy. U.S. Ambassador to France David Bruce, for example, reported that there was a feeling among French officials that “some brakes should be put on the ‘impetuous’ leadership of the U.S.”¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ Letter, F. W. Stover to A. R. Guernsey, Box 1, Series I, Papers of Fred Stover (hereafter PFS), University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

¹⁴¹ Thomas Norman, “Why No One Can Be Neutral,” 4, in Box 11, PRF, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University, Stanford, California.

¹⁴² Memorandum, The Ambassador David Bruce to the Secretary of State, “Review of Political Development During the Months of September, October, and November, 1950,” December 13, 1950, *FRUS 1950 Vol. III: Western Europe*, 1440.

Sparks Within Clarified

Sparks flew among the allies as British Prime Minister Clement Atlee hurriedly visited the White House in early December 1950. Because he came immediately after Truman's "statement" about the possible use of the atomic bomb in Korea, the media focused sensationally on that issue.¹⁴³ Yet, in the over nine hours of the six meetings between Truman and Atlee in five days, the most controversial and recurrent issue, actually, involved how to evaluate China's actions.¹⁴⁴ The focus was on whether Chinese communists were subservient "satellites," and whether China's intervention was a part of "Moscow's game"—a part of the Cold War. Atlee pointed out, "The Chinese don't owe [the USSR] very much. [...]. There is a strong mixture of Chinese nationalism in their communist attitude." Alluding to Tito of Yugoslavia, the British Prime Minister concluded, "They may wear the Red flag with a difference."¹⁴⁵ Urging Truman to treat China as a Chinese issue and Korea as a Korean issue, instead of viewing both as parts of the Kremlin's scheme, Atlee opposed the spread of war against the mainland, and insisted on the recognition of the PRC, suggesting that it be given a seat at the United Nations.¹⁴⁶

For Acheson and Truman, however, Atlee's suggestion was out of the question. "[I am] far less optimistic about China," said Acheson, "Chinese Communists were servient to Moscow. All they do is based on the Moscow pattern,

¹⁴³ William Stueck, *The Korean War*, 130-38.

¹⁴⁴ For details of the Truman-Atlee conference, see *FRUS 1950: Vol. III Western Europe*, 1706-87.

¹⁴⁵ *FRUS 1950: Vol. III Western Europe*, 1714-15, 1725-26.

¹⁴⁶ *FRUS 1950: Vol. III Western Europe*, 1762-63.

and they are better pupils even than the Eastern European satellites.”¹⁴⁷ In this comment, Acheson’s usage of the term “pupil,” characterizing China in comparison to Eastern European countries, is suggestive. As MacArthur in 1951 described Japan as a “boy of 12” as compared to the German and Anglo-Saxon, who were “45 years of age,”¹⁴⁸ Acheson similarly compared Chinese and Eastern European communist countries; the former, in his mind, was a better “pupil”—a metaphor that fit well with conventional prejudice of the Chinese as being more passive, submissive, and dependent than Europeans.

Acheson’s observation was nothing surprising in view of the American popular version of perceived-reality. As a matter of fact, for many Americans at that time, it was “decadent” Europeans who rather continued to “close their eyes to the danger than squarely face it.”¹⁴⁹ The president of a trading company in Detroit, Michigan, opposed Atlee’s suggestion, saying:

We all know that Russia is behind the moves in Red China. We know that Russia knows we are not prepared. ... [N]ow is the time to get tough. Now is the time to tell Stalin that, if he doesn’t see that Red China gets out of Korea at once, we will use the [atomic] bomb, not only on Chinese concentrations but on the Kremlin as well. [...] I believe if we were to drop a couple of [atomic] bombs on the Kremlin and pour it on them we might start a revolution within.¹⁵⁰

A San Francisco man similarly insisted, “Appeasement is a backward step. It did not work with Hitler; it will not work with Stalin. Americans will fight and fight alone if necessary.”¹⁵¹ Another New Yorker asserted: “The people seem to understand better

¹⁴⁷ *FRUS 1950: Vol. III Western Europe*, 1711-12.

¹⁴⁸ John Dower, *War Without Mercy*, 142-46, 302-3.

¹⁴⁹ Roscoe Drummond, “The State of Europe; Danger from Within,” December 1950, File 2, SF No. 44, HSTL, Independence, Missouri.

¹⁵⁰ Letter, Charles R. Kennedy to Harry S. Truman, December 4, 1950, Box 1305, Official File 471-B, HSTP, Independence, Missouri.

¹⁵¹ Letter, Esther R. to Harry S. Truman, December 6, 1950, File 2, SF No. 44, HSTL, Independence,

than the diplomats that there is no difference between the Russian and Chinese brands of communism.”¹⁵² What is important about these expressions of displeasure over Atlee’s attempt to convince Truman is not their peculiarity but commonness in society at that time. An editorial in the *Pittsburgh Press* concluded: “To assume that the American people will accept what appears to be Britain’s attitude toward those Red aggressors is a fantastic absurdity.”¹⁵³ It was a “fantastic absurdity” because the danger appeared to be so clear and present for many Americans. Fighting communism at home and abroad looked to be of vital importance to protect Americans.¹⁵⁴

There were, to be sure, unignorable differences of opinions in American society. First and foremost, China experts at the time warned against dominant images of China in the United States. Harvard Professor John King Fairbank, for instance, argued that the Chinese Revolution was fundamentally a matter for the Chinese people to decide,¹⁵⁵ and that Americans “must put the Communist victory in China down as a case of self-determination, not of outside aggression.”¹⁵⁶ As a China specialist, he paid attention to the inner dynamics of China, and this made him much more conscious of the limits of foreign influence. He wrote:

The greatest error that Americans can make is to look at China but think only of Russian expansion. [...]. It is incredible that Modern China...could be brought into

Missouri.

¹⁵² Letter, A. Cumings to William Knowland, Box 272, PWK, UC Berkeley, Bancroft Library, Berkeley, CA.

¹⁵³ Editorial, *Pittsburgh Press*, December 10, 1950, File 2, SF No. 44, HSTL, Independence, Missouri.

¹⁵⁴ See, for instance, David Lawrence, “What Do We Mean By ‘Preventive War’?” *US News & World Report*, September 8, 1950, and “War Now? Or When? Or Never?” *Time*, September 18, 1950.

¹⁵⁵ John King Fairbank, *The United States and China* 1st ed. (Cambridge, 1948), xiii.

¹⁵⁶ John King Fairbank et al., *Next Step in Asia* (Cambridge, 1949), 18.

the orbit of any foreign power—Russian, American, or any other—*except* in so far as China's own inner development *itself* conduced to such an orientation.¹⁵⁷

Other China experts, such as Owen Lattimore of Johns Hopkins, Thomas A. Bisson of U.C. Berkeley, as well as John Paton Davies, John Stewart Service, and O. Edmund Clubb of the State Department expressed similar viewpoints, which could have deepened and diversified various conceptions of China.

However, such did not happen at this time. The questions are: Why were most of these China experts silenced and suppressed in the early 1950s? Why were some particular “facts” more magnified so that they became dominant views of “reality,” marginalizing other kinds of facts and realities? Why did the two images—“China and Korea as a tool of the USSR” and “Captive Millions”—become so pervasive? To answer these questions, we need to look at domestic dynamics of “translation” in the United States. When observing foreign affairs amidst a sea of information, domestic preconceptions functioned as filters, sorting what would be considered “factual” and what would not be. Images of submissive China became prevalent not necessarily because they properly reflected the real situation in China, but because they were well suited to existing prejudices at home about the Chinese. By the same token, the aforementioned China experts were marginalized in the McCarthy era—all except Fairbank actually lost their jobs—not because they told “lies” but because their perspectives did not fit with dominant views, and were considered dangerous elements. In other words, reality somewhere else did not shape understandings; rather, the frame of understanding chose and shaped what would be considered “facts” and “reality.”

¹⁵⁷ Fairbank, *The United States and China*, 3-4.

With the shaping and consolidation of a particular kind of “reality,” those who had disagreed with the mainstream orthodox view became conspicuous in their communities, and came to feel inhibited. A California psychologist, in fact, observed:

A great many young men are approaching me professionally with questions, in a mood of extreme anxiety... [T]hey feel that the United States has become a police state, in which citizens are no longer free to speak frankly, and where to desire peace is considered subversive, almost unlawful. Life in the United States has become a sort of a nightmare to them.¹⁵⁸

As this observation suggests, in the process of making and consolidating a particular kind of “reality,” what became clear were dividing lines between “us” and “them,” both at home and abroad. In other words, the politics of truth-making itself, conducted by both state and non-state projects, did not create a consensus. Nor did it resolve disagreements in society. Rather it clarified them. As we have seen, governmental and non-governmental efforts to make “truth” in this period set off enthusiastic support and participation, on the one hand, and provoked opposition, on the other. To solve such conflicts when they surfaced, much more brutal and societal measures were necessitated: domestic social purges in many parts of the world during the early period of the Korean War

¹⁵⁸ Letter, Felix H. Bistram to HST, 31 August 1950. Papers of Harry S. Truman, Truman Library, Independence, MO.

Chapter 5: Pictures

Picture 1-1:

""Wufan' yundong de zhaopian--youxing shiwei renqun
[Pictures of 'Five-Anti' movements--People in demonstration]"

January 1952

Shanghai, PRC

H1-14-5-54

Shanghai Municipal Archives, Shanghai, PRC



Picture 2:

"Shanghai di shiliu mianfangsha chang fan Meidi xuanchuan
banbao [Anti-American imperialism blackboard at Shanghai
No. Sixteenth cotton spinning factory]"

1951

Shanghai, PRC

H1-31-6-8

Shanghai Municipal Archives, Shanghai, PRC



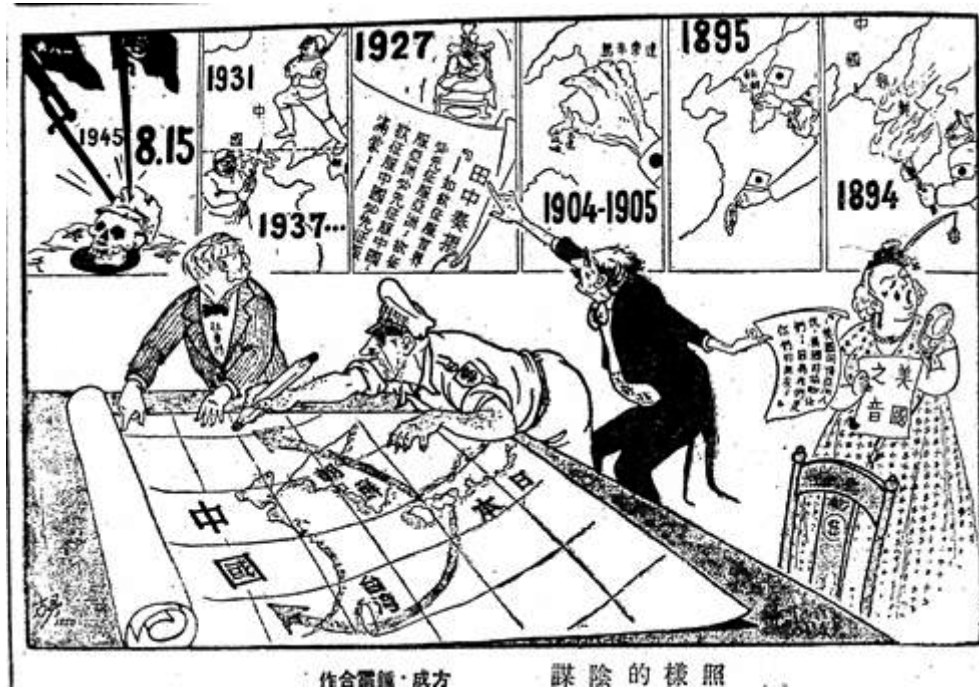
H1-31-6-8

Picture 3:

“Zhaoyang de yinmou [Plot in the same old way]”

Changjiang Ribao

November 10, 1950



Picture 4-1:

"Shanghai di shiliu mianfangsha chang fan Meidi
[Anti-American imperialism movement at Shanghai
No. Sixteenth cotton spinning factory]"

1951

Shanghai, PRC

H1-31-6-22

Shanghai Municipal Archives, Shanghai, PRC



H1-31-6-22

Picture 4-2:

"Shanghai jinrong zhigong fandui Meidi wuzhuang
Riben shiwei da youxing zhaopian [Shanghai banking staff and
workers demonstrating against America rearming Japan]"

March 1951

Shanghai, PRC

H1-23-6-45

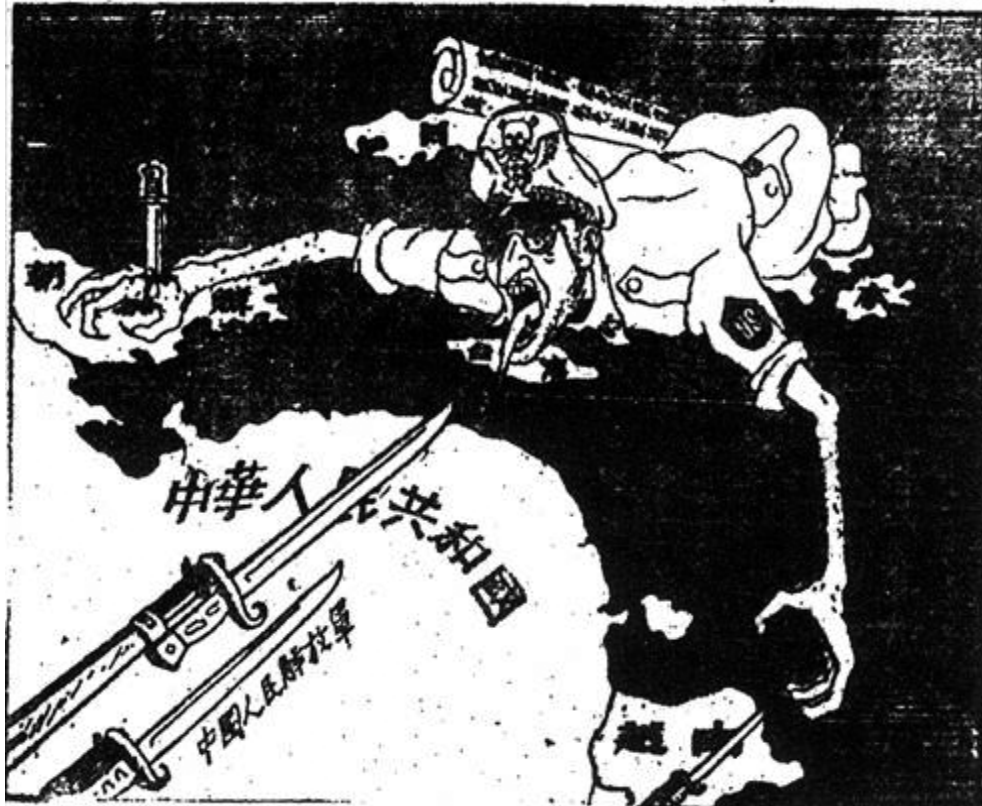
Shanghai Municipal Archives, Shanghai, PRC



H1-23-6-45

Picture 5-1:

Changjiang Ribao
December 4, 1950



In this cartoon, McArthur is described as threatening mainland China from Japan, with his left hand on Korea, his right hand on Vietnam, and his chin on Taiwan.

Picture 5-2:

Xian Qunzhong
December 3, 1950



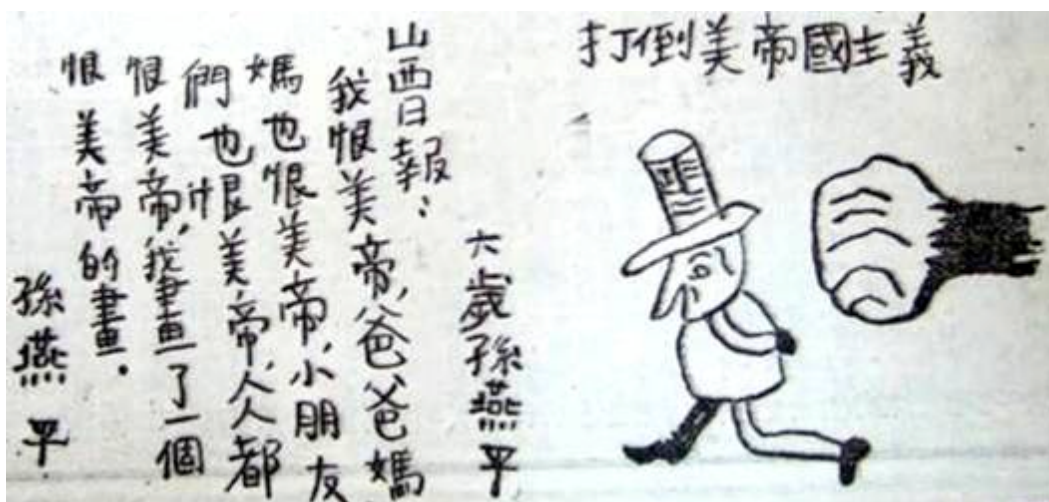
In this cartoon, the “American Imperialist” was Described as planning to attack mainland China From three directions, Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam.

Picture 6:

Xinhua Ribao
December 11, 1950



Shanxi Ribao
November 1950



Picture 7-1:
Jinbu Ribao,
November 21, 1950



Picture 7-2:
Renmin Ribao
November 24, 1950.



Picture 8::

“The Meaning on the Reverse”

Renmin Ribao

November 29, 1950

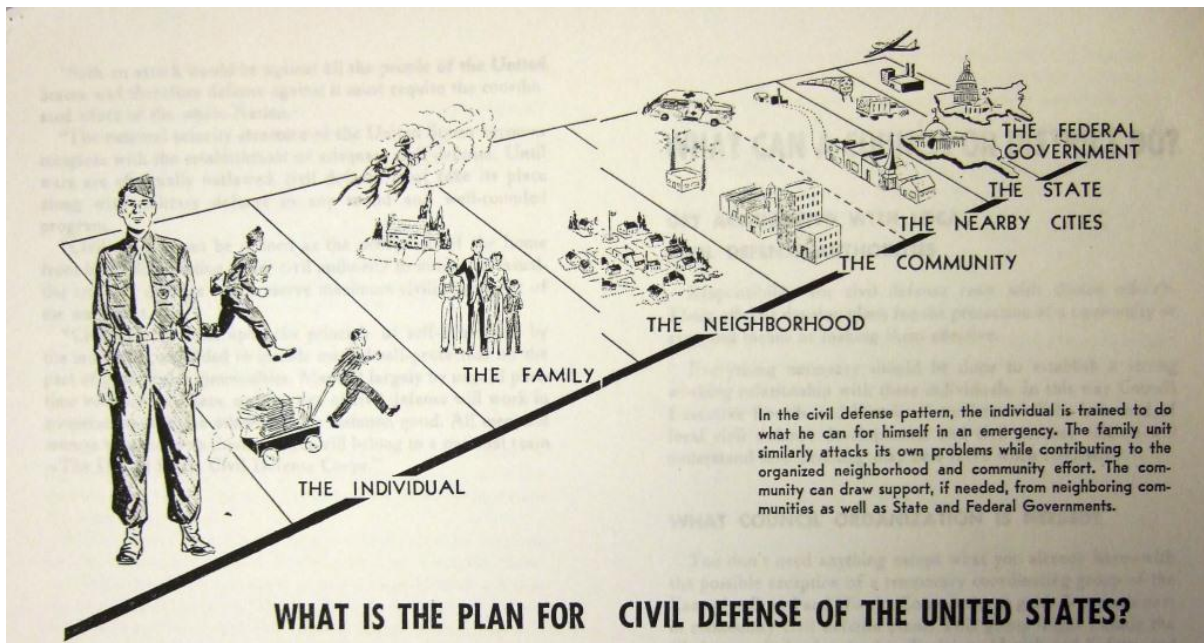


Picture 9:

"What is the Plan for Civil Defense of the United States?"

Civil Defense Program

Harry S. Truman Library, Independence Missouri



Picture 10:

“ZhongSi youhao, zheshi Mao Zedong taohao de banfa”
[The Sino-Soviet Friendship, this is Mao Zedong’s method to fawn on]
The Center for the Study of the Korean War
Independence, Missouri.



In this propaganda cartoon produced by U.S. army intelligence, Mao Zedong fawn on Stalin, giving him, for instance, “Dalian,” “lüshun,” and “Changchun railroads.” The dish Mao Zedong is bringing read “Chinese sovereignty.”

Picture 11-1:

“Why must your leader bow to Russian master?”

October 3, 1952

The Center for the Study of the Korean War
Independence, Missouri.



In this propaganda cartoon, a small figure of “Kim Il-sung” is described as worshipping a statue “Communism” that has Stalin’s face.

Picture 11-2:

“Why die for China?”
The Center for the Study of the Korean War
Independence, Missouri.



This propaganda cartoon shows a Russian is pushing Chinese communist, who, in turn, is pushing North Korean Soldier forward into the Korean War.

Picture 12:

"Harvest Time for the 'Agrarian Reformer'"

Saturday Evening Post

December 16, 1950



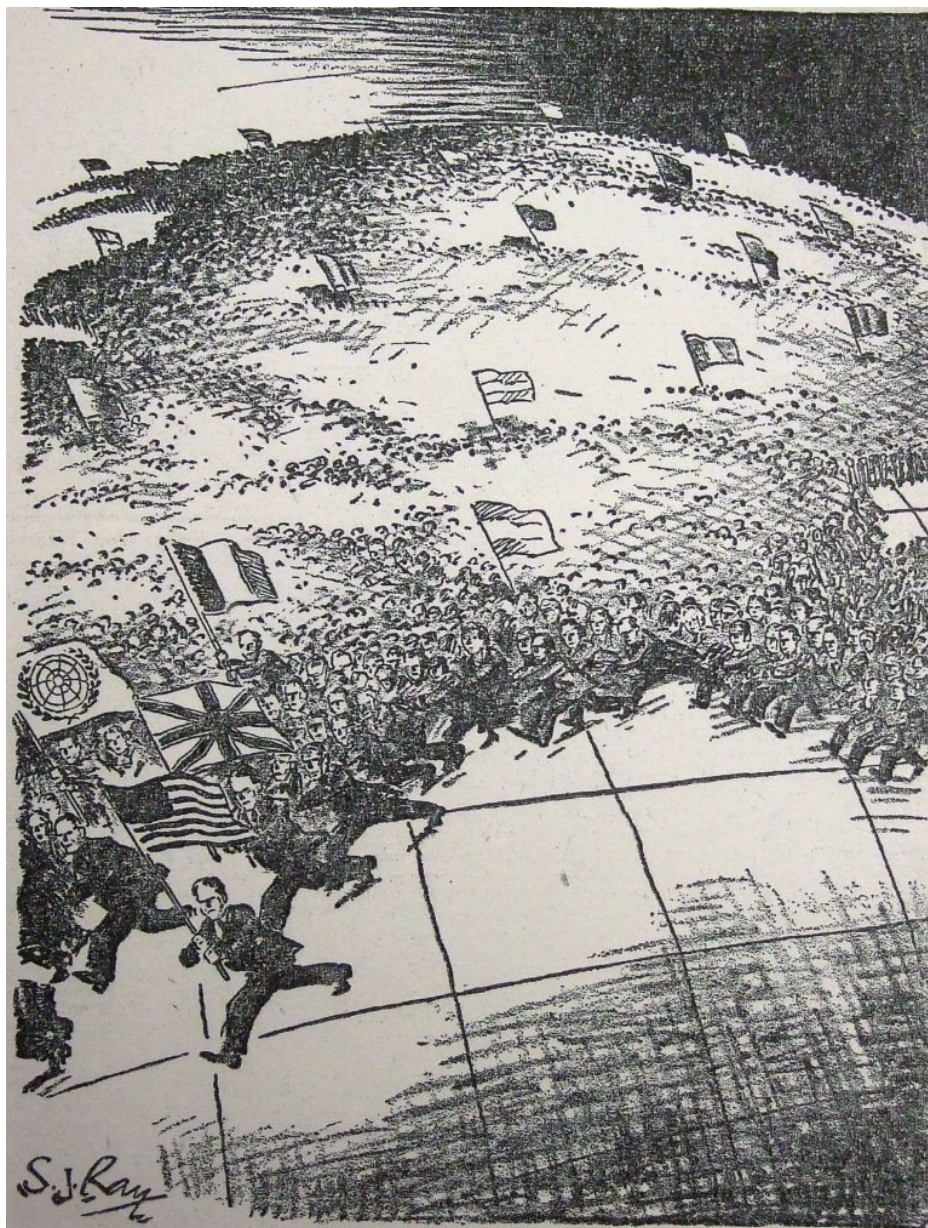
Picture 13:

"If There Ever Was a Time for the Free World to Rally!"

Kansas City Star

December 16, 1950

Harry S. Truman Library
Independence, Missouri.



Part III: Epoch of Simultaneity

Chapter 6: Between Mobilization and Participation

[T]he civilians who are outside the combat, who do not fight, but talk, who write and embroil themselves in a factitious and lunatic agitation and are never exhausted; these are delivered over to the winds of feverish violence. And there is the danger. For they form opinion, the only opinion that can be expressed (all others are forbidden).¹

Romain Rolland, *Above the Battle* (1916)

In the first six months of the Korean War, the war situation shifted at a dizzying pace: North Korean armies' attack on the South in June, American forces' Inchon landing in September and crossing of 38th Parallel northward in October, and China's entry into the war in October and its forces' crossing of the 38th Parallel southward in December. With such repeated turning of the tables taking place so rapidly, numerous cases of tragedy occurred in many parts of Korea: civilian massacres. One of the most well-known incidents by now, which happened in Nogunri (Noguen-ri), south of Taejun (Daejeon) in July 1950, involved American soldiers' indiscriminate killing of several hundred civilians—including infants and elders.² Another case, occurring in Gwangju immediately following the Inchon Landing, involved North Korean forces killing six hundred arrested rightists.³ Another case, occurring continuously near the Jirisan region in the spring of 1951,

¹ Romain Rolland, *Above the Battle* translated by C. K. Ogden (Chicago: Open Court Pub. Co., 1916), 101-102.

² Robert L Bateman, *No Gun Ri: A Military History of the Korean War Incident* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2002); Park Myung-lim, *Senso to heiwa: Chosen hanto 1950* [War and Peace: the Korean Peninsula 1950], translation of Park Myung-lim's *Hanguk 1950: chonjaeng kwa pyonghwa*, trans. by Mori Yoshinobu (Tokyo: Shakai hyoronsha, 2009), 257-62; Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War Vol. 2: The Roaring of the Cataract, 1947-1950* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 706.

³ Park Myung-lim, 200.

involved South Korean soldiers' indiscriminate massacre of 1,500 local residents suspected of helping enemies.⁴

In addition to these mass killings, primarily conducted by state militaries, recent studies have begun revealing many different patterns of massacres, which occurred in the areas where regular armies were absent. For example, in the Yeonggwang region, 35,000 local residents—one fifth of the area's entire population—were reportedly killed without much involvement of the regular army. Most victims, according to Korean scholar Park Myung-lim, were slain at the hands of locals as the climax of long-lasting struggles, such as those among leftists and rightists, as well as among landowners and sharecroppers, all of which were reignited and escalated with the turns of the war situation.⁵ In another case, in the village of Sedeung-ri on the southern island of Jindo, local struggles, not just between leftists and rightists in the village, but against collaborationists during the time of Japanese colonialism, as well as among clans and families in the village that flared up with changes in the war situation, eventually lead to mutual killings in the village.⁶

Such mass killings during the wartime, which have been come to light in recent years, were indeed diverse, refusing any simple classification and labeling. Still, we can discern a number of common characteristics among them. First, most, if not all, were conducted under Cold War terms, such as “rounding-up Communists”

⁴ Kim Dong choon (Kim Tong-chun), *Chosen Senso no shakaishi: hinan, senryo, gyakusatsu* [A Social History of the Korean War: Evacuation, Occupation, Massacre] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2008), 263-66, translation of Kim Tong-chun's *Chonjaeng kwa sahoe: uri ege Hanguk chonjaeng un muot ionna?*

⁵ Park Myung-lim, 201.

⁶ Ibid, 202.

or “class struggle.” Second, nonetheless, quite a few massacres contained elements of local struggles residing in social, cultural, and historical settings underneath the mass slaughters. Such struggles included, for example, those between leftist and rightist residents, landowners and sharecroppers, wartime collaborationists and non-collaborationists, Christians and non-Christians, among clans, among families, among friends and neighborhoods, and so on. In many cases, these were the struggles that existed long before the outbreak of the Korean War, but had remained “unresolved.” Third, in addition to large-scale massacres conducted by military forces, intentionally or reflectively, many mass killings involved the participation of local people, in some cases quite directly, and, in other cases, by more indirect methods, such as rumors and mutual surveillance among locals that often exacerbated the degree of the mass killings.⁷ In a sense, many massacres in Korea can be seen as having an element of social suppression at a local level that was rekindled and which exploded during the Korean War.

Intriguingly, such experiences were not particularly unique to Korea. While degrees of violence differed widely, a similar pattern of social suppression appeared in many parts of the world in the early period of the Korean War: the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries in China, the White Terror in Taiwan, the crackdown on “un-Filipino” activities in the Philippines, the Red Purge in Japan, and “anti-communist” currents in Western societies, such as McCarthyism in the United States. Each instance of domestic purging, of course, had its own local history, and

⁷ Similar accounts can be found in Bruce Cumings, *The Korean War: A History* (New York: 2010), 165-203. Also, a Korean novelist Hwang Seok-yeong wrote a best-selling narrative, based on his interviews, on the topic of mutual killings that occurred in Sincheon in October 1950; Hwang Seok-yeong, *Sonnimu* [The Visitors] trans. by Chon Gyonmo. (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2004).

all had different degrees of violence. Nevertheless, in each instance, locals similarly utilized the bipolar worldview of the Cold War in stifling social and cultural conflicts at home, often choosing a particular version of “reality” through the “purification” of society, eventually creating a more “harmonious” and “orderly” society, in each case. Why did such similar suppressions occur simultaneously all over the world? How were they developed and conducted? Who purged whom for what purpose? What were the implications of such a worldwide phenomenon?

In exploring these domestic social suppressions, the prime focus is to think about their meanings through looking into each society. The process is to trace what happened in society, rather than to investigate the center of political power. This is because, by primarily examining the center of power—such as intentions and decisions of powerful policymakers—we tend to pay little attention to the fundamental meanings of social events. The meaning, in this approach, is assumed to be self-evident, as it is often confused with policymakers’ intentions, as if a social phenomenon were a result of their intentions, and as if the political center were the origin for social and cultural change. Instead, this chapter treats the center of power, not as the *origin* of, but a *part* of social and cultural events. Thus, instead of beginning with the search for power holders’ intentions, we delve into what happened in these suppressions, paying particular attention to: who purged whom for what purpose. The intentions of persons in power will be brought up for discussion, but the focus will not necessarily be on how they originated events in society, but how they reacted to them. Examining domestic purges in this way, the following two chapters intend to explicate the implications of the simultaneity and

analogousness of these social suppressions, and to think about how these implications affect the meaning of this worldwide phenomenon during the Korean War period.

China: Reconsidering the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries

On April 28, 1951, Shanghai's famous Canidrome, a once fashionable and dazzling greyhound-racing track, originally built in 1928, was charged with a heated atmosphere from the morning. Squeezed against the oval of the immense greensward was a crowd of 10,000 people. A stage was set up in front of the central platform at the center of the sea of humanity, and, on the stage, were accused persons, bound by ropes or chains, with heads down, awaiting judgment, and listening to speeches by party officials, witnesses, students, and peasants. According to a British *Manchester Guardian* reporter, the mass of the people sang songs, waved red flags bearing the slogans of the regime, and howled imprecations against the accused persons. It was one of countless mass accusation meetings in Shanghai, conducted as part of the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries (*Zhenya fan-geming*, or *Zhenfan*), a wave which swept over Shanghai and numerous other cities nationwide from late fall of 1950 through the summer of 1951 (Picture 1). Such a mass meeting was reportedly preceded with a series of accusations and confessions, in each case followed by a customary question and answer between official prosecutors and the crowd. "Shall we shoot them?" a prosecutor, for instance, asked.

“Death to them! Death to them!” answered the crowd, “Take them back to the scene of their crime and kill them.”⁸

On that day at Canidrome in Shanghai, the crowd sentenced to death more than 200 persons with such shouts, which local newspapers described “a unanimous roar.” These charges were reviewed and confirmed the next day by the Shanghai Military Control Commission. According to court documents, for example, Zhang Wanjin, a 31-year-old ex-policeman, who retained his position following the change of regime, was sentenced to imprisonment for the crime of spreading a rumor in 1950, allegedly saying “Chiang Kai-shek will counterattack this year, and the U.S. forces will land at ports nearby, attacking Shanghai from three directions—land, sea, and air.”⁹ Likewise, Lian Zhenan, a 33-year-old ex-military doctor, was sentenced to imprisonment, charged with allegedly disrupting a “*fan Mei-fu-Ri* [Opposing America’s Support of Japan]” demonstration in Shanghai on the fourth of March in 1951, by shouting of “reactionary” slogans.¹⁰ Cheng Wei, a 39-year-old man, was

⁸ “Public ‘Confession’ and Execution,” *Manchester Guardian*, November 14, 1951, in “Reports, comments and information from many sources showing the extension of power of the ruling Chinese Communists over the political, social and economic life of the whole of China...,” FO371/92204, British National Archives (hereafter BNA), Kew, U.K.; *Time* magazine’s series articles on China: “China: Mass Slaughter,” April 30, 1951, “China: Justice on the Radio,” May 7, 1951, and “China: Kill Mice!” May 21, 1951; Report on the Shanghai Military Control Commission in *Xinwen ribao* on July 25, 1951; Memorandum, Tientsin to Foreign Office, U.K., July 13, 1951, in “Reports, comments and information from many sources showing the extension of power of the ruling Chinese Communists over the political, social and economic life of the whole of China...,” FO371/92201, BNA, Kew, U.K.. Also, see Yang Kuisong, “Reconsidering the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries,” *China Quarterly*, 193 (March 2008), 111; and Julia Strauss, “Morality, Coercion, and State Building by Campaign in the Early PRC: Regime Consolidation and After, 1949-1956,” in Julia Strauss ed., *The History of the PRC, 1949-1976: The China Quarterly Special Issues New Series No. 7* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 52-53.

⁹ “Shanghai shi junshi guanzhi weiyuanhui panchu fangeming anfan de jue ding shu [Shanghai Military Control Commission’s written verdicts on the cases of counterrevolutionaries],” May 12, 1951, B1-2-1050-45, Shanghai Municipal Archives (hereafter SMA), Shanghai, PRC.

¹⁰ “Shanghai shi junshi guanzhi weiyuanhui panchu fangeming anfan de jue ding shu [Shanghai Military Control Commission’s written verdicts on the cases of counterrevolutionaries],” April 18, 1951, B1-2-1050-62, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.

sentenced to death, charged with allegedly spreading “reactionary” rumors, such as “The Nationalist Party is coming back.” According to a judgment document, available at the Shanghai Municipal Archives, he retorted, “Now everyone says Chairman Mao. But in the era of Chiang Kai-shek, everyone said Generalissimo Chiang, Generalissimo Chiang. Why did nobody say Chairman Mao at that time? We don’t need to be honest!”¹¹

As soon as their accusations were confirmed, such “criminals” were sent to public execution sites. Let us take a look an example of a public execution, observed by Norimura Kaneko, a Japanese girl who witnessed a mass execution meeting in the small city of Haicheng, near Shenyang, in late summer of 1951. Norimura and her family continued to live in the area after Japan’s surrender in World War II, and, at that time, she was a student at a local junior school.

It was a sweltering day. Norimura and her schoolmates walked to the beach along the Haicheng River without knowing what event would be held there. When they arrived in the late afternoon, a crowd of people was already there. Children were playing nearby. Many students from other schools arrived at the site, and there was a joyful mood in the air. As usual in this sort of gathering, singing began, and Norimura and her classmates joined in. Within an hour, a chorus of people began yelling “Crush the invasion of American imperialism!” “We will never allow spies’ subversive activities!” An innumerable number of fists were raised in the air as the slogans were repeated.

¹¹ “Shanghai shi junshi guanzhi weiyuanhui panchu fangeming anfan de jue ding shu [Shanghai Military Control Commission’s written verdicts on the cases of counterrevolutionaries],” B1-2-1063-12, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.

“What on earth is going to happen?” Norimura wondered.¹²

Before long, appeared a progression of men, their hands tied behind their backs. The first was a thin, middle-aged man; he looked poor, his hair a mess. The second was a fair-skinned young man who was crying in tears; his nose was running and his chin was dripping with his slobber. The next one surprised Norimura, because his loose trousers slipped down to his ankles, exposing his body below the waist, as he was dragged along by soldiers and walking awkwardly. The children laughed at him as he passed by. The rest of the crowd—men and women, young and old—likewise laughed derisively and convulsively, pointing, booing, and pouring ridicule and scorn on him. These prisoners of “counterrevolutionaries” passed by Norimura’s eyes one by one, and soon came to a stop about 100 feet from her, where they knelt as if bowing to the sun. Norimura suddenly noticed that there was a hole in front of them.

“Shh!” “Shh!” “Quiet!” people said to one another. Soon the sound of a rifle cocking could be heard, and then a soldier held the muzzle of the rifle against a prisoner’s head.¹³

Bang!

With a crack, the man who had been crying fell silent and disappeared from Norimura’s sight. The executions continued, one by one. Even after they were

¹² Norimura Kaneko, *Zanryu shoujo no mita chousen sensou no koro* [The Time of the Korean War from the Eyes of a War-displaced Japanese Girl] (Shakai shisosha: Tokyo, 92), 96-98.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 98-102.

finished, excitement remained in the crowd. Some people tried to look into the hole, where the bodies of the prisoners had piled up.¹⁴

Such a series of executions raised quite audible questions and critiques even at that time. According to an observation of popular attitudes by local officials in Beijing, some people said, "It was too lenient before, but now it is too harsh." Others lamented, "It is pitiful to execute the old, and regrettable to kill the young." Another was more sympathetic to those accused: "They committed to their accused acts perhaps due to the pressure from their livelihood; everyone would do the same if their living become strained." Some even expressed doubts, "There have been too many executions. There must be some false charges." Nevertheless, according to the local official's observation, these opinions remained relatively in the minority, often quickly responded to in retorts by surrounding people: "Well, do you really know how they had murdered the people before? Those who were killed by these persons died in much more miserable ways."¹⁵

In this way, scenes of denunciation, execution, doubt, and containment of critiques were repeated in numerous places all over China between the fall of 1950 and summer of 1951. As such, Beijing and Tianjin reportedly carried out various mass meetings, 29,629 and 21,400 of them, respectively, and, in Shanghai alone, more than 33,000 people were denounced and nearly 29,000 were charged as

¹⁴ Ibid, 102-105.

¹⁵ "Beijing qunzhong dui zhenya fangeming de fanying [Popular reactions in Beijing toward the suppression of counterrevolutionaries]," April 9, 1951, in *Neibu cankao*, Chinese University of Hong Kong (hereafter CUHK), Hong Kong, PRC; "Lanzhou zhenya fangeming fenzi hou de shehui fanying [Social reactions after the suppression of counterrevolutionaries in Lanzhou]," April 9, 1951, in *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC; and Julia Strauss, "Morality, Coercion, and State Building by Campaign in the Early PRC" in Strauss ed., *The History of the PRC*, 51.

“counterrevolutionaries.”¹⁶ It is no wonder that, reporting numbers of executions week after week became a routine for foreign diplomats.¹⁷ In addition to delivering numbers of deaths, some British diplomats in Shanghai reported that their servants had suddenly disappeared, or been officially arrested for being “running dog[s] of the imperialists.”¹⁸ We still do not know the precise numbers of executions and imprisonments during this period, and, in fact, British diplomats doubted that actual figures would far exceed those published, but it was officially acknowledged that roughly 712,000 people were executed, nationwide, 1,290,000 were imprisoned, and 1,200,000 became subject to house arrest.¹⁹

The Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries has generally been considered, for good reason, the Chinese Communist Party’s top-down, coercive, political cleansing campaign, aimed at suppression of ex-Nationalist Party members and sympathizers.²⁰ In particular, scholars have paid significant attention to the

¹⁶ Luo Ruiqing, “Weida de zhenya fangeming yundong [The great campaign to suppress counterrevolutionaries],” October 1, 1951, *Renmin ribao*.

¹⁷ See telegrams, memorandums, and reports sent from Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Wuhan, Nanjing, and other places to the Foreign Office, U.K. between March and July 1951. These documents can be found the record group between FO371/92192 and FO371/92206, entitled “Reports, comments and information from many sources showing the extension of power of the ruling Chinese Communists over the political, social and economic life of the whole of China...,” BNA, Kew, U.K.

¹⁸ Telegram, Beijing to Foreign Office, U.K. (April 6, 1951) in “Reports, comments and information from many sources showing the extension of power of the ruling Chinese Communists over the political, social and economic life of the whole of China...” FO371/92196, BNA, Kew, U.K.

¹⁹ These numbers were based on Deputy Public Security Minister Xu Zirong’s report in 1954, which was recounted in Yang Kuisong’s “Reconsidering the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries,” *China Quarterly*, 193 (March 2008), 120-121. For the British official’s doubt, see a telegram from Shanghai to Foreign Office, UK (June 8, 1951) in “Reports, comments and information from many sources showing the extension of power of the ruling Chinese Communists over the political, social and economic life of the whole of China...,” FO371/92198, BNA, Kew, U.K.

²⁰ Yang Kuisong, “Reconsidering the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries,” *China Quarterly*, 193 (March 2008), 102-121; Yang Kuisong, “Xin Zhongguo zhenfan yundong shimo [The story of the Suppression of Counterrevolutionaries in New China]” and “Shanghai zhenfan yundong de lishi kaocha [Historical examination on the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries in Shanghai],” in Yang Kuisong, *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo jianguo shi yanjiu* [A Study about the History of the Establishment of the People’s Republic of China] Vol. 1 (Nancheng, PRC: Jiangxi renmin chubanshe,

CCP's roles—particularly those of Mao Zedong—in the development of the movement. While disagreements surely exist in terms of political stances and evaluation of the phenomenon, most scholars approach this subject through the lens of traditional political history, that is, looking at a political event (the “*Zhenfan* movement”) largely as a result of the intentions of policymakers (“Mao Zedong”).

To be sure, this approach has a certain merit. The campaign developed with Mao's directive issued on October 10, 1950, the so-called the “double-ten directive,” and further escalated in late January of 1951 under Mao's instruction, and, thus, it makes sense to emphasize the responsibility of Mao Zedong.²¹ Nonetheless, this approach has tended to confirm our traditional understanding of the movement, describing it as if Beijing's leadership had a consistent intention and policy, as if the CCP controlled the expansion and contraction of the phenomenon, as if ordinary people were merely passive followers—or victims—of the campaign, and as if the campaign followed a communist path peculiar to post-1949 China. These points have to be further examined.

2009), 168-217 and 218-259; Julia Strauss, “Morality, Coercion, and State Building by Campaign in the Early PRC: Regime Consolidation and After, 1949-1956,” in Julia Strauss ed., *The History of the PRC, 1949-1976: The China Quarterly Special Issues* New Series No. 7 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 37-58; Julia Strauss, “Paternalist Terror: The Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries and Regime Consolidation in the People's Republic of China, 1950-1953,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (Jan., 2002), 80-105; Frederic Wakeman Jr. “‘Cleanup’: The New Order in Shanghai,” in Jeremy Brown and Paul Pickowicz ed., *Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People's Republic of China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 21-58; Konno Jun, *Chugoku shakai to taishu doin: Mo takuto jidai no seiji kenryoku to minshu* [Chinese Society and Mass Mobilization: Political Power and People in the Era of Mao Zedong] (Tokyo: Ochanomizu shobou, 2008); and Izutani Yoko, *Chugoku kenkoku shoki no seiji to keizai: Taishu undo to shakai shugi taisei* [Politics and Economy in the Early Period of the People's Republic of China: Mass Movements and Socialist Regime] (Tokyo: Ochanomizu shobou, 2007).

²¹ Yang Kuisong, “Reconsidering the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries,” *China Quarterly*, 193 (March 2008), 104-105, 107-108.

First of all, it is important to note that Beijing did not necessarily have a consistent intention or belief in supervising the *Zhenfan* movements from beginning to the end. As historian Yang Kuisong elaborately traces, Beijing's policy followed a zigzag course even in this short period of time. For example, within just two months of issuing the double-ten directive, Liu Xiaoqi sought to slow down the escalation of the *Zhenfan* movement, and Mao Zedong agreed, suggesting that an "excessively nervous atmosphere" must not be created. And yet, a month later, in mid-January of 1951, Mao endorsed a number of large-scale executions in western Hunan as a "completely necessary step," an example which, Mao now thought, should be followed by all other provinces whether urban or rural.²²

Second, while the *Zhenfan* movement surely evolved under the direction of the communist authority, the CCP was not necessarily controlling the course of the phenomenon. When Beijing sought a comprehensive contraction of the campaign after May of 1951, for example, the waves of arrests and executions did not actually diminish in many parts of China. On the contrary, they continued to grow, despite the change in Beijing's policy. In the East China region, for instance, an additional 110,000 people were arrested and nearly 40,000 were executed after Beijing tried to limit large-scale and wild arrests and executions.²³ A similar pattern of Beijing seeking to soothe aggressive local sentiments appeared in terms of the matter of dealing with foreigners living in Chinese cities. Beijing was criticized as being cowardly when it set a policy of deporting foreigners who committed "counterrevolutionary" acts; according to one local official's observation, some even

²² Ibid, 106.

²³ Ibid, 117-119.

accused the government of being weak-kneed and incompetent toward foreigners and foreign countries.²⁴

Why did Beijing not have a consistent policy, and why did it not control the campaign? In the first place, the direction of the *Zhenfan* campaign was always linked with the war situation in Korea. For Beijing and communist officials, the progress of the Korean War appeared as an uncertain variable that could create harmful effects on the CCP's domestic programs. For instance, a report from the regional communist office argued that a lukewarm attitude in the *Zhenfan* campaign would be blamed because, if the war situation radically changed and the tide turned against China, such an attitude might cause the CCP to be on the defensive and to have a difficult time making up for the loss.²⁵ As we can see in this comment, the *Zhenfan* campaign was seen to be of a piece with progress in the Korean War, and, in fact, changes of policy in the movement coincided with changes in the war situation.

In relation to this point, another uncertain, arguably more fundamental variable for communist officials was the state of popular attitudes at home that could easily be tilted by any change in the war situation. It is no wonder that the question of how the mass of people would react came to surface frequently at moments of policy change in the campaign. For example, when Beijing sought to

²⁴ "Gonganbu guanyu qunzhong dui chuli waiji fan geming fenzi de fanying [Memorandum from the Ministry of Public Security concerning popular responses toward the dealing of foreign counterrevolutionaries]," June 25, 1951, No. 118-00306-15, Foreign Ministry Archives (hereafter FMA), Beijing, PRC. For the official policy of the Foreign Affairs Ministry, see, for instance, "Zhongyang guanyu waiguo fangeming de chuli wenti dao gedi de zhishi dian [Directive from the central government to various regions concerning the issue of dealing with foreign counterrevolutionaries]," August 2, 1951, No. 118-00306-01, FMA, Beijing, PRC. In this telegram, Beijing notified that, in general, foreigners who were considered counterrevolutionaries would be deported from the country, and basically would not be executed.

²⁵ "Zhongnan guanyu zhenya fangeming de zhishi de dianbao [Telegram of the Mid-South Regional Bureau concerning the directive of suppression of counterrevolutionaries]," November 30, 1950, No. 118-00306-16, FMA, Beijing, PRC.

lower the temperature of the *Zhenfan* movements in December of 1950, it was reasoned that “indiscriminate and multi-directional strikes [should] be avoided lest the overall situation become too tense and we ourselves become isolated.” Mao Zedong supported this view, emphasizing that “If our cadres do not have a clear idea [...] and not to stick strictly to it, [...] the people will not support us.”²⁶ Then, when Beijing decided to take on a more aggressive and harsh policy in late January of 1951, it was justified by Mao as such: “If we are irresolute and tolerant to this evil [of counterrevolutionaries], we will alienate the people.”²⁷ As we can see in these comments, Mao paid significant attention to the tide of popular attitudes when it came to policymaking.

In a sense, it is reasonable to say that the course of the *Zhenfan* movement was often swayed by circumstantial situations and Beijing’s time-to-time observations concerning them, rather than guided by the CCP’s ideological tendencies or Mao’s personal character. The unbridled rampancy and spread of the *Zhenfan* movement further suggest that the phenomenon was not simply the end-result of the CCP’s political suppressions, but had its own dynamics in breeding and developing itself—an aspect that has been less well examined: that is, the Suppression of Counterrevolutionaries Movement as social suppression and punishment.

Social Suppression

²⁶ Yang Kuisong, “Reconsidering the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries,” *China Quarterly*, 193 (March 2008), 106.

²⁷ *Ibid*, 107.

Let us briefly take a look at how the Suppression of Counterrevolutionaries Movement functioned in local scenes. Beyond ideological slogans and drastic spectacles in mass meetings, ordinary practices of the Suppression of Counterrevolutionaries Movement were less concerned with ideology and political struggles. For example, when the Association of Street Venders in Beijing adopted the campaign in their markets, they used it for their own purposes of tightening morals and order among their members. Their slogans in this campaign were:

“No delay of tax payments.”
“No cheating customers.”
“Always issue receipts.”
“Use standardized measuring instruments.”
“Do not ask an artificially raised price.”
“Keep street venders clean.”²⁸

In addition to these, “No pee and no shit on roadside and inside venders” was a campaign slogan that the Venders’ Association advocated in their campaign against “counter-revolutionaries.”²⁹

Many of these topics had no apparent connection to the CCP’s struggles against “counterrevolutionaries,” but, interestingly, these street venders’ campaigns were framed and conducted, and worked efficiently under the name of “Suppression of Counterrevolutionaries.” It was claimed that street venders were fighting a different kind of war on the home front against counterrevolutionaries, that cooperation among venders could stabilize the Chinese economy and public order, and that their tax payments would support the fight against American Imperialism

²⁸ “Beijing shi tanshang kang-Mei yuan-Chao jingsai yundong youguan wenjian [Documents related to Beijing street vendors’ movements of Resisting America and Assisting Korea],” No. 022-012-00497, pp. 25, 142, 185-187, and 194, Beijing Municipal Archives (hereafter BMA), Beijing, PRC.

²⁹ Ibid, 194.

on the front lines.³⁰ Here we can see how locals utilized the foreign war and how they adopted the banner of the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries.

By the same token, locals participated in the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries in their own ways. As in other places, residents in the Dong-an Market in Beijing adopted the guilt-by-association system during the campaign; under this system, five households formed one group, monitoring one another, and, in the case of someone's violation of promises, all members of the group would be punished.³¹ Such a mutual surveillance system functioned quite efficiently. In one instance, when a street vender tried to make money by cheating a customer, it was reported that other booth keepers blamed him in unison.³² In another case, local residents in Beijing carried out an activity of "Suppression of Counterrevolutionaries" by forming district patrol groups, though their primary aims, in addition to searching for "subversive" activities, were to prevent fires and thefts.³³

In another case, a neighbors' group interceded in the case of a husband's violence in the home, carrying out an accusation meeting in their community, in which the man in question critiqued himself and promised not to use violence

³⁰ Ibid, 196.

³¹ "Dongan shichang kan-Mei yuan-Chao aiguo yundong... [Kang-Mei yuan-Chao patriotic movements in the Dongan Market...]," May 14, 1951, in "Beijing shi tanfan kan-Mei yuan-Chao gongzuo jihua [Planning and summing-up of Beijing street vendors' workings of Resisting American and Assisting Korea]," No. 022-010-00314, pp. 42-43, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

³² "Beijing shi tanfan kan-Mei yuan-Chao gongzuo jihua [Planning and summing-up of Beijing street vendors' workings of Resisting American and Assisting Korea]," May 15, 1951, No. 022-010-00314, pp. 96, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

³³ "Beijing shi tanshang kang-Mei yuan-Chao jingsai yundong youguan wenjian [Documents related to Beijing street vendors' movements of Resisting America and Assisting Korea]," No. 022-012-00497, pp. 132-134, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

anymore.³⁴ A resident in this district described the sprits of the neighborhood as radically improved after the establishment of neighbors' group; the area became cleaner, thefts were eliminated, bumpy roads were repaired, and residents' disputes were settled by the neighbors' group.³⁵ Clearly, as in the case of the Street Venders' Association, the Dong-an Market's campaigns had almost nothing to do with ideological and political struggles against "counterrevolutionaries." Rather, when it came to daily practice, locals adopted and developed the campaign in a much more common way, which functioned not merely as the CCP's political cleansing, but also as a mechanism of social cleansing in order to restore and maintain order in communities.

Looking at these local campaigns on the ground, one notes historical continuity. What local people aimed to achieve were, for instance, "preciseness" as opposed to corruption, "cleanliness" as opposed to filthiness, and "unity" as opposed to disorder, and so on. Needless to say, these were not new issues; rather, they had been quite familiar concerns in modern Chinese history since the late nineteenth century. In a sense, observing local campaigns, we can see the social aspect of the *Zhenfan* campaign, which was not particularly unique to the post-communist revolution period.

In fact, even the Nationalist Party's failed campaign, the New Life Movement, in the prewar period showed some similarity. According to historian Arif Dirlik, Chiang Kai-shek and GMD leaders in the 1930s saw that the traditional life of the

³⁴ Izutani Yoko, *Chugoku kenkoku shoki no seiji to keizai: Taishu undo to shakai shugi taisei* [Politics and Economy in the Early Period of the People's Republic of China: Mass Movements and Socialist Regime] (Tokyo: Ochanomizu shobou, 2007), 224-225.

³⁵ Ibid, 225.

Chinese could be summarized in a few words: filthiness, hedonism, laziness, self-indulgence, and so on. That is why the GMD's New Life Movements held up high eight criteria to be pursued: orderliness, cleanliness, simplicity, frugality, promptness, precision, harmoniousness, and dignity—some of which were quite identical to what was sought on the ground in the *Zhenfan* movement in the Communist era.³⁶ The crux of these values was, simply put, an effort toward “modernity,” or even blatant “Westernization,” despising and excluding traditional values of “Chineseness,” which tended to be described only in negative terms. Viewed in this way, there was not such a fundamental difference between the GMD's and CCP's movements. While terminology, of course, was different, both aimed at the “modernization” of China, and the making of a “nation-state” by European standards. For that purpose, both rulers sought to mobilize, organize, and unite the people Sun Wen (Sun Yat-sen) once described as “a heap of loose sand.”³⁷

The fundamental differences between the two lay in terms of method rather than content. In the *Zhenfan* campaign, “informants” and “investigators” were not necessarily official or secret police, as in the GMD era, but, largely, ordinary people. In fact, diverse “counterrevolutionary” acts were identified and reported less by official investigations than unofficially through rumors and private accusations among members of workplaces, schools, communities, neighborhoods, and families. In Shanghai alone, the authority received more than 70,000 written denunciations.³⁸

³⁶ Arif Dirlik, “The Ideological Foundations of the New Life Movements: A Study of Counterrevolution,” *Journal of Asian Studies*, 34, 4 (August 1974), 954-958.

³⁷ “A New Pattern of Life,” *Manchester Guardian*, November 20, 1950, in “Reports, comments and information from many sources showing the extension of power of the ruling Chinese Communists over the political, social and economic life of the whole of China...,” FO371/92192, BNA, Kew, U.K.

³⁸ Konno Jun, *Chugoku shakai to taishu doin: Mo takuto jidai no seiji kenryoku to minshu* [Chinese

The youth, in particular, were extremely active in informing on “counter-revolutionaries;” a box set up at Fudan University in Shanghai, for instance, received more than 700 reports in a few months in the spring of 1951.³⁹ There were reportedly quite a few cases involved sons and daughters and wives informing on their fathers and husbands, and vice versa.⁴⁰ An official in Shanghai described:

During the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries, a lot of young people actively joined in the movement, often informing on their own fathers, sisters-in-law, and even close friends, who were counterrevolutionaries. Such cases are too numerous to mention. A multitude of people cooperated with the Public Security Department to collect information, participate in surveillance, and arrest counterrevolutionaries.⁴¹

Surveillance among the people, among students and workers, and among neighbors and family members, was so close, many individuals seemed to internalize the campaign, restricting their behaviors by themselves; some who came under suspicion voluntarily appeared at public security bureaus, describing their acts and groups, while others stopped going out and stayed at home. Some who possessed small weapons quietly left them at night at the doors of public security stations.⁴² More tellingly, a massive number of people decided end their own lives. Statistical

Society and Mass Mobilization: Political Power and People in the Era of Mao Zedong] (Tokyo: Ochanomizu shobou, 2008), 119-120.

³⁹ “1951 nian bannian lai jinxing kang-Mei yuan-Chao aiguo zhuyi jiaoyu de qingkuang baogao [Situation report concerning the ongoing patriotism education of Resisting America and Assisting Korea in the first half of 1951],” September 21, 1951, C21-1-108-13, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.

⁴⁰ “Jiaoqu funv Kang-Mei Yuan-Chao aiguo yundong 4 yue zongjie [The Summary of women's activities of the Resisting America and Assisting Korea patriotic movements in the outskirts of Beijing in April],” April 1951, No. 084-003-00008, BMA, Beijing, PRC; and “China: Mass Slaughter,” April 30, 1951, *Time* magazine.

⁴¹ “Qingnian duan Shanghai shi wei guanyu zai Kang-Mei Yuan-Chao, Zhenya fangeming yu tudi gaige yundong zhong dui shehui qingnian gongzuo de zongjie [The youth group in the Shanghai city committee's final report concerning the activities toward the youth during the movements of Resisting-America and Assisting Korea, Suppression of Counterrevolutionaries, and Land Reform],” October 17, 1951, No. C21-1-143, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.

⁴² “Jin shi fangeming fengzi luxu tanbai dengji jiaochu wuqi [Counterrevolutionaries in Beijing confessing, registering, and surrendering their weapons one after another],” April 13, 1951, *Neibu cankao*, CUHK, Hong Kong, PRC.

data taken in the summer of 1951 shows that ages of suicides ranged from early twenties to early sixties, with those in their thirties the most numerous, and that quite a few wives of those executed as “counter-revolutionaries” also had to choose death by themselves.⁴³ Interestingly, those who killed themselves involved diverse kinds of people, including not only landlords and ex-Nationalist Party members, but also those categorized as roaming persons, local rebels, collaborators, and members of secret societies and religious sects, as well as those deemed “feudalistic” and “uncooperative.”⁴⁴

Such heterogeneity was not coincidental. It rather suggests that we reconsider the nature of the so-called Suppression of Counterrevolutionaries. In fact, the lists of those executed in this period similarly include diverse kinds of people. If the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries was purely a political repression carried out by the Communist Party aimed at the elimination of adversaries, those who executed and killed themselves should have been mostly political and ideological “enemies,” such as landlords, businessmen, as well as ex-Nationalist Party members and sympathizers. Yet, to the contrary, a large number, particularly those who worked under the GMD government, such as bureaucrats, policemen, teachers, and lower ranking officials, retained their positions and continued to work.

Those who were actually condemned and eliminated during this campaign against “counterrevolutionaries,” in fact, involved much broader and diverse groups

⁴³ “Shijiao quwei guanyu zhenya fangeming de qingkuang tongji biao; fangeming fenzi zisha dengji biao [Statistical tables concerning the situation of suppression of counterrevolutionaries in the outskirts of Shanghai; The tables registering the suicide of counterrevolutionaries],” July 25, 1951, No. 71-2-94, SMA, Shanghai, PRC.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

of people, which fit more neatly in the category of “social enemies” than that of “political enemies.” They included, for example, members of religious sects such as *Yiguandao*, powerful gangs such as the *Yellow Or*, and secret societies such as *Triad*, the *Green Shirts*, and the *Elder Brothers*, as well as common criminals and those involved in what were considered social evils such as bandits, murderers, robbers, local bullies, low level hoodlums, and brothel keepers and prostitutes.⁴⁵ As a British official in Beijing observed, many of those executed were not really “counterrevolutionaries,” but merely “little more than common criminals.”⁴⁶

Apparently, what these diverse people shared was not a single ideology. Further studies are needed, but it can be hypothesized that they represented elements in society embodying the drastic social chaos and changes that arose from the recent experiences of World War II and the Civil War. Viewed in this way, the phenomenon of the Suppression of Counterrevolutionaries had an aspect that can be seen as part of social “purification”—a backlash against social change.

Such an aspect can be seen in the “*Sanfan wufan* [Three-Anti and Five-Anti]” movements, which developed in 1951-53, following the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries. Originally, the “Three-Anti” meant the Communist Party’s fight against three “evils”—corruption, extravagance, and bureaucratism—which

⁴⁵ Memorandum, Beijing to Foreign Office, U.K., “A Final Report on China,” October 1951, in “Reports, comments and information from many sources showing the extension of power of the ruling Chinese Communists over the political, social and economic life of the whole of China...” FO371/92206, BNA, Kew, U.K; Telegram, Beijing to Foreign Office, U.K., January 19, Ibid, FO371/92192, BNA, Kew, U.K; Telegrams, Beijing to Foreign Office, U.K., March 3, and March 6, 1951, Ibid, FO371/92194, BNA, Kew, U.K; Telegram, Foreign Office, U.K. to Embassies, May 11, 1951, in “China: Political Situation,” DO133/27; Telegram, Beijing to Foreign Office, April 7, 1952, in “China: Political Situation,” DO133/28, BNA, Kew, U.K; and Julia Strauss, “Morality, Coercion, and State Building by Campaign in the Early PRC,” in Strauss ed., *The History of the PRC*, 46-48.

⁴⁶ Telegram, Beijing to Foreign Office, U.K., March 3, 1951, in ““Reports, comments and information from many sources showing the extension of power of the ruling Chinese Communists over the political, social and economic life of the whole of China...” FO371/92194, BNA, Kew, U.K.

supposedly represented evils of capitalism. When such an ideological slogan was conveyed and carried out on the ground, however, actual conduct criticized was less ideological and more related to personal characteristics and social behaviors, such as going to dance halls, using cars, having affairs with housemaids, and so on.⁴⁷ One document included a lengthy explanation of typical targets in the “Three-Anti” movement:

[P]ursuing personal and selfish pleasure, disliking cotton cloth, buying new leather shoes to replace with lower-cut shoes, dining out on [costly] noodles instead of having breakfast in a factory, avoiding sitting around a one-pot meal together and preferring a sumptuous meal, accompanying the dishes with rice, smoking a cigarette, wishing to live in a western room, envying an American top futon as comfortable, shunning a train as crowded and desiring to use a car or, at least, a tricycle, ride a tricycle just to go one kilometer, never negotiating price, avoiding cheap articles, and hoping to get things with high quality even though they are expensive.⁴⁸

Note that these instances did not problematize ideological tendencies of individuals so much. The focus was more on people’s attitudes and behaviors on a daily basis, and what these instances share seems to be an antipathy toward things considered non-Chinese, or put simply, grassroots dissatisfactions with elements of recent Westernization in Chinese society, which can be viewed as a nativist backlash against recent developments, most noticeably in large cities such as Shanghai and Tianjin.

Putting it bluntly, the CCP’s mass movements, such as the *Zhenfan* and *Sanfan* movements, were not merely the party’s political campaigns. Rather, as they

⁴⁷ Konno Jun, *Chugoku shakai to taishu doin* [Chinese Society and Mass Mobilization], 102.

⁴⁸ “‘Gongchang sanfan yundong tongbao’ 1952 nian di 2 hao [‘Bulletin of Sanfan movements in Factories’ Vol. 2, 1951],” February 12, 1952, in “‘Gongchang sanfan yundong tongbao’ ji gongchang sanfan zonghe qingkuang [‘Bulletins of Sanfan movements in Factories’ and the comprehensive situation on the Sanfan movements in factories],” Quoted in Konno Jun, *Chugoku shakai to taishu doin* [Chinese Society and Mass Mobilization], 127.

pervaded and escalated on the ground, they seemed to obtain other dimensions; that is, first of all, they were parts of a long-standing project of “modernization” of China, and, second, simultaneously, parts of a contingent, large-scale, nativist backlash, aiming at the making of a “harmonious” society through eliminating tens of thousands of diverse nonconformists and various elements of social “disorder,” including overly Western influences.

The Korean War and the Making of “Harmonious” Society

In October 1951, Luo Ruiqing, Minister of Public Security, praised the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries, saying that it “brought a stable situation nationwide which China has never had before in its history.”⁴⁹ In fact, solely in terms of the level of social stability, unprecedented “peace” and “harmony” came to China. In the city of Nanning, for instance, criminal cases decreased from 4,314 in 1950 to 1,318 in 1951, and 455 in 1954.⁵⁰ Likewise, In Jiangxi Province, which was known for a low standard of public safety, and where even CCP officials had to travel with large numbers of heavily-armed guards, public security was greatly improved, making it possible for them to travel with only a few guards.⁵¹

Observing such a situation, a British newspaper, the *Manchester Guardian*, which, of course, remained critical of the *Zhenfan* movement and its purges of

⁴⁹ Luo Ruiqing, “Weida de zhenya fangeming yundong [The great campaign to suppress counterrevolutionaries],” October 1, 1951, *Renmin ribao*; Konno Jun, *Chugoku shakai to taishu doin* [Chinese Society and Mass Mobilization], 92-93.

⁵⁰ Yang Kuisong, “Xin Zhongguo zhenfan yundong shimo [The Story of the Suppression of Counterrevolutionaries in New China]” in Yang Kuisong, *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo jianguo shi yanjiu* [A Study about the History of the Establishment of the People’s Republic of China] Vol. 1 (Nancheng, PRC: Jiangxi renmin chubanshe, 2009), 203-204.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 204.

nonconformists, accepted the “improvement” in public spirit in Chinese society, writing that “the country as whole is more unified and peaceful than at any time since 1911.”⁵² What the British newspaper paid attention to were, for example, the change in attitude of public officials, noting that they no longer saw the old familiar sight of a policeman slapping and kicking rickshaw coolies, and that public spiritedness was taking the place of excessive individualism.⁵³ Even if it entailed the killing of tens of thousands of people, and however cruel it was, the *Zhenfan* movement did provide a sort of “order” to an unprecedented degree through the “purification” of society and “settlement” to social confusion and conflicts.

How did such an unprecedented order emerge? The CCP’s propaganda, to be sure, was significant, but far more fundamental was a background against which this propaganda could work efficiently: that is, first, the outbreak and development of the Korean War, second, the existence and escalation of domestic conflicts along with the war, and, third, more than anything else, nameless and countless ordinary people’s observations, judgments, and behaviors concerning both of these. It was the Korean War that forced many local people—in particular, the youth—to connect a foreign war with social problems and to re-think their behavior.

With the background of the Korean War, countless storekeepers competed to make donations, many shoemakers declared their intentions to repair soldiers’ shoes for free, rickshaw coolies signed or gave their names for the Patriotic Pledge,

⁵² “The Credit in the Balance-Sheet,” *Manchester Guardian*, November 17, 1950, in “Reports, comments and information from many sources showing the extension of power of the ruling Chinese Communists over the political, social and economic life of the whole of China...,” FO371/92192, BNA, Kew, U.K.

⁵³ Ibid.

and students and workers participated in mobilization campaigns.⁵⁴ These were the people who surprised a tax office clerk in Beijing who, previously, had experienced the perpetual problem of non-payment of overdue taxes in his district, because now taxpayers organized themselves and took initiative in paying taxes.⁵⁵

These were the people who sought to “solve” diverse social and local problems under the logic of the war, and under the banner of the Campaign to Suppress Counter-revolutionaries. Thus, these were also the people on the grassroots level who informed on various acts of “counterrevolution” within workplaces, schools, neighborhoods, and families. These were the people who, as a result, cooperated and supported the CCP’s modernization and state-making projects through mass movements. The top party official, Liu Shaoqi, in fact, recognized that the CCP’s domestic programs, in particular land reform and the suppression of counter-revolutionaries, would be difficult to maintain without the Korean War.⁵⁶

This section has examined Chinese society and politics during the Korean War through tracing the development and transformation of the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries, in which millions of people were killed or sent to prisons as “reactionaries.” With the opening of Chinese archives, to be sure, the literature on this topic has grown in the last decade, but most recent studies have

⁵⁴ “Beijing shi tanfan kan-Mei yuan-Chao gongzuo jihua zongjie [Planning and summing-up of Beijing street vendors’ activities of Resisting American and Assisting Korea],” No. 022-010-00314, pp. 23-25, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

⁵⁵ “Diwu quwei guanyu wuqu kang-Mei yuan-Chao yundong de chubu jihua, zongjie, baokao [The fifth district committee’s planning, summary, and report concerning the Resisting America and Assisting Korea movements in the fifth district of Beijing],” 040-002-00119, BMA, Beijing, PRC.

⁵⁶ Yang Kuisong, “Reconsidering the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries,” *China Quarterly*, 193 (March 2008), 105.

tended to share a set of assumptions, viewing the phenomenon as political and ideological suppression, which was conducted by the Chinese Communist Party—with an emphasis on Mao Zedong’s roles—thus describing it as following a communist path peculiar to post-1949 China. Through tracing the multifaceted development of the campaign, however, this section intends to complicate conventional understandings of its nature, agency, and function of the phenomenon, arguing that, in essence, it was not simply the CCP’s ideology-driven one-man show, but also grassroots social punishment and suppression aimed at the “purification” of society, with the active involvement of everyday people.

Viewed in this manner, the campaign was not necessarily unique to the Communist Party. Utilizing a societal perspective, my study rather describes this campaign as part of processes of social “tranquilizing,” aimed at the making of a “harmonious” society through eliminating tens of thousands of nonconformists and social minorities, that is, the “integration” of society. Interestingly, a different but somewhat similar process can be seen across the Taiwan Strait with the escalation of domestic purging in Taiwan particularly during the Korean War period: the White Terror.

Taiwan: Reconsidering the “White Terror”

At 6:00 a.m. on October 1, 1950, a court-martial at the Headquarters of Public Security in Taiwan gave nine defendants a sentence of death for jointly plotting to overthrow the government and harboring “rebels,” ordering the execution to be conducted immediately. At 6:30 a.m., the nine convicts—including Liu Quanli and

others, mostly in their mid-twenties and early-thirties—were sent straightaway to the public execution ground, known as *Machang ding*, on the riverbank of the Danshui River in Taipei, where their sentence was carried out quickly. In spite of rain, according to a news report, a crowd of onlookers rushed to the scene, cheering, shouting, and applauding, as they saw the nine shot to death. The bodies were promptly removed and sent to a public cemetery on the outskirts of the city.⁵⁷

Such a public execution in the early morning became almost a ritual in Taiwan in the summer and fall of 1950. Every time execution was held, the names, ages, and addresses of those executed were posted at train stations and markets, written in red letters. Placards and handbills soon appeared everywhere, reading, for example, “Spies are living just around you,” “Informing on spies is everyone’s responsibility,” “Knowing spies but not informing is a crime,” “Anti-communism never compromises, anti-communism requires unity,” and so on.⁵⁸ Such slogans permeated not just public space, but also packaging of home commodities and gifts, such as from cigarette cases, calendars, movie tickets and receipts, to paper fans and even cakes at weddings.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Qiu Guozhen, *Jindai Taiwan canshi dangan* [Records of Tragic History in Modern Taiwan] (Taipei, Taiwan: Avanguard Publishing House, 2007), 205. For the description of similar executions, see, for example, Chen Yingtai, *Huiyi: jianzheng Baisekonbu* [Recollections: Testifying the White Terror] (Taipei, Taiwan: Tangshan chubanshe, 2005), 109.

⁵⁸ Lin Shuyang, *Cong 2.28 dao 50 niandai baise kongbu* [From 2.28 to the White Terror in the 1950s] (Taipei, Taiwan: Shibao wenhua chubanshe, 1992), 132; Lan Bozhou, *Baise kongbu* [The White Terror] (Taipei, Taiwan: Yangzhi wenhua shiye, 1993) (1993), 43; and Li Wanbei, (Gaoxiang shifan daxue, 2008), 22.

⁵⁹ Hui Xunhui, “Taiwan wu-ling niandai guozu xinangxiang zhong ‘gongfei/feidie’ de jiangou [the construction of ‘Communist bandits/spies’ in the imagination of the Nationalists in Taiwan in the 1950s]” (Tunghai University, Master thesis, 2000), 74.

Slogans of this kind were not only visible everywhere but, literally, audible in many places in major cities, as loudspeakers set in the streets and markets repeated anti-communist slogans and songs:

Counteroffensive, counteroffensive, counteroffensive to the mainland
Counteroffensive, counteroffensive, counteroffensive to the mainland
The mainland is our land, the mainland is our territory
Our land, our territory
We cannot allow the Maoist bandits occupy our land
We cannot let the Russians humiliate us as they wish
We need to make a counteroffensive
Counteroffensive to come back
Counteroffensive to recover the mainland
To recover the mainland ⁶⁰

Newspapers and magazines, likewise, discussed the need to crack down on “spies,” reporting arrests and executions of “subversives,” and publishing articles, poems, and cartoons that often described various kinds of “heroic” stories of “patriots” informing on and arresting communists.⁶¹ These were not merely slogans or stories. With the enactment of the Wartime Regulations for the Purge of Spies in June 1950, finding and informing on subversives and suspected persons were not just encouraged but required by law. Members of governmental offices, military units, schools, factories, and various other organizations were required to exercise mutual surveillance.⁶²

⁶⁰ Li Wanbei, “Baise kongbu shounan zhe jiashu Ko-Tsai A-lee nvshi shengming gushi tanjiu [An inquiry into a life story of Mrs. Ko-Tsai A-lee who was a family member of a victim in the White Terror] (National Kaohsiung Normal University, Master thesis, 2008), 21

⁶¹ Editorial, “Lun sujian gongzuo [Discussing a purge of traitors],” *Minsheng ribao*, September 29, 1950, National Taiwan University, Taipei, Taiwan. Also, see, for instance, Lin Shuyang, *Cong 2.28 dao 50 niandai baise kongbu*, 132; Lan Bozhou, *Baise kongbu*, 43.

⁶² Chen Cuilian, “Taiwan jieyan shiqi de tewu yu baise kongbu fenwei [The reign of spy during the martial law in Taiwan and the atmosphere of the White Terror]” in Zhang Yanxian and Chen Meirong ed. *Jieyan shiqi baise kongbu yu zhuanxing zhengyi lunwen ji* (Taipei, Taiwan: WuSanlian Taiwan shiliao jijinhui, 2009), 65-66.

This was the moment when the storm of purges, later called the White Terror, raged throughout Taiwan, particularly in the years following the outbreak of the Korean War, in which an estimated three to five thousand were executed, and eight thousand were imprisoned for decades to follow.⁶³ Data provided by the Department of Defense for the first time in 2005 shows that the number of arrests jumped to 1,882 cases in 1950 from 212 in 1949, and remained high until 1954.⁶⁴ According to Lin Shuyang, who was, himself, jailed in 1950, arrests could be made by various institutions, such as police, military-police, and intelligence agencies, without following legal procedure.⁶⁵ There was no need to present a warrant of arrest, no written indictment, no lawyer, no public trial, no right to appeal, and, occasionally, even the judgment document was omitted. Torture was routine, and often confessions were extorted or framed-up.⁶⁶ Even those convicts not sentenced to death were often imprisoned quite a long time on an isolated island in the Philippine Sea, called *Lyudao* [Green Island]; Lin Shuyang, for instance, was jailed nearly thirty-five years, beginning in 1950.⁶⁷

Studies of the “White Terror” have dramatically increased in number in Taiwan in the last decade. Still, a series of purges and violence in the 1950s have received relatively minor attention, compared to the large volume of research concerning earlier repressions, namely, the 2.28 incident in Taiwan—a series of mass uprisings against the Nationalist Party government occurring in the weeks

⁶³ Lan Bozhou, *Baise kongbu*, 21, 48.

⁶⁴ Su Ching-hsuan, “Guojia jianzhi yu Baise konbu: Wushi nianday chuqi Taiwan zhengzhi anjian xingcheng zhi yuanyin” [State-Building and the White Terror: The Causes of Political Persecution in the Early 1950s in Taiwan] (National Taiwan University: Master Thesis, 2008), 14-15.

⁶⁵ Lin Shuyang, *Cong 2.28 dao 50 niandai baise kongbu*, 133.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 133; Lan Bozhou, *Baise kongbu* (1993), 43-44.

⁶⁷ Lin Shuyang, *Cong 2.28 dao 50 niandai baise kongbu*, 133.

following February 28, 1947.⁶⁸ Furthermore, when discussed, the series of suppressions in the early 1950s has generally been viewed through the Cold War lens, lumped together as the “White Terror.” The implication of this naming is that the terror was conducted primarily by the state power, the Nationalist Party, as a means to eliminate communists and communist sympathizers in Taiwan, efforts supported by and part of the anti-communist grand strategy of the United States.⁶⁹

The phenomenon we call the “White Terror” in the early 1950s, however, deserves more attention and a much more fundamental reconsideration. First and foremost, as many researchers have pointed out, a large portion of those suppressed during this period were neither communists nor communist sympathizers. In fact, underground communists in Taiwan numbered only several hundred at that time, in contrast to the number of victims that easily surpassed ten thousand.⁷⁰ Who were those suppressed? Why were they persecuted? The victims, indeed, contained diverse groups of people, including not only communists and communist sympathizers, but also, for instance, members of social elites since the time of Japanese colonialism, such as intellectuals, doctors, lawyers, journalists, college students, and the literati, as well as those who hoped Taiwan would be an autonomous region in China, those insisting on the independence of Taiwan, the native populations of Taiwan who had been fighting for decades for autonomy, and so on.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Kikuchi Kazutaka, “1950 nen dai Taiwan Hakusyoku tero jyunan no kaioku [Recollections of the White Terror in Taiwan in the 1950s]” in *Kindai Chūgoku kenkyū ihō* [Bulletin for Modern Chinese Studies] 21 (1999), 49, 81.

⁶⁹ See, for instance, Lan Bozhou, *Baise konbu* (1993).

⁷⁰ Ibid, 66; Su Ching-Hsuan (2008), 45.

⁷¹ Lan Bozhou, *Baise kongbu* (1993), 116; Su Ching-Hsuan (2008), 9-11; and Wakabayashi Masahiro,

Examining the profiles of victims in this period would be an entry point to thinking about the actual nature of the suppression. Lin Yixu, a 28-year-old elementary school teacher, for instance, was arrested in 1950 and sentenced to twelve years' imprisonment of attending a circle and reading progressive magazines, such as *Guancha* (Observation) and *Zhanwang* (Prospects).⁷² Likewise, Lin Enkui, a 28-year-old doctor, was arrested in 1950 for an almost identical reason.⁷³ Thousands of students and workers who studied and worked in Japan during wartime and returned to Taiwan in the early postwar period similarly suffered persecution.⁷⁴ Chen Shaoying, who worked and studied in Osaka during the war and returned to Taiwan in 1946, was arrested in 1950, even though he actually rejected a friend's invitation to enter the communist party.⁷⁵ Furthermore, quite a few elites in the native populations in Taiwan, such as Watan Tang (Lin Zhaoming), who advocated for autonomy for their populations, were arrested in the early 1950s.⁷⁶ Moreover, Deng Jinjiang, a 29-year-old teacher at an agricultural school in Taidong, was arrested for simply expressing anti-war thoughts, even though he was not involved in any anti-war or leftist activities.⁷⁷

All of these kinds of cases have generally been considered examples of a large number of false charges; these were tragedies, an epiphenomenon, which accidentally accompanied the Nationalist Party's brutal suppression of communists

Taiwan (Tokyo, Chikuma shobo, 2001), 101.

⁷² Lin Yixu, an interview in *Jieyan shiqi Taibei diqu zhengzhi anjian xiangguan renshi koushu lishi: baise kongbu shijian chafang*, Lü Fangshang ed. (Taipei, Taiwan, 1999), 18.

⁷³ Lin Enkui, an interview in *Gaoxiong xiang 228 ji wushi niandai Baise kongbu minzhong shi*, Lan Bozhou ed. (Gaoxiong, Taiwan: Gaoxiong xian zhengfu, 1997), 306-12.

⁷⁴ Qiu Guozheng, 173.

⁷⁵ Chin Shouoei, *Gailai seiken asseika no sei to shi* (2003).

⁷⁶ Qiu Guozheng, 266-68.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 199-200.

and communist sympathizers. Because they have been considered as such, not much attention has been paid to exploring what these “false charges” meant. On the contrary, the increasing numbers of memoirs and oral histories published in recent years has, rather, confirmed that many suffered under false charges and they were innocent victims of the “White Terror.”

To begin with, however, thousands of “misrepresentations” look like an accidental epiphenomenon only because we view the White Terror as the Nationalist Party’s suppression of communists. Once we remove the Cold War lens and look at local situations in Taiwan at that time, however, the situations look different. It might be possible that the cases of “false charges” were not simple and incidental mistakes; rather, many of them might be, actually, the real targets of the suppression. The questions are: Who were the victims? What did they represent? Why did they have to suffer persecution at that time? To think about these questions, we need to turn back to the historical and social background of the so-called White Terror.

Local and Social Roots of the White Terror

The White Terror did not begin suddenly in the summer and fall of 1950. Many victims, in fact, were arrested based on behaviors and activities between 1945 and 1949, in particular those during the 2.28 incident in 1947. In a sense, the White Terror was focused on questions raised and unresolved in Taiwanese society in the postwar period. The core question was what kind of society Taiwan would and should be. As a matter of fact, society and politics in Taiwan in the postwar period

had the appearance of chaos, being divided into diverse rival camps, not just between the GMD and CCP sympathizers, but also among *Waishengren* [settlers from the mainland after 1945] and *Benshengren* [people who had been living in Taiwan, including Chinese settlers who came before 1945; often described simply as Taiwanese], the native populations in Taiwan, as well as those advocating the unification, independence, or autonomous status of Taiwan.⁷⁸ To begin from the conclusion, the series of purges during the Korean War period functioned as a means to bring “settlement” to the disputes and disorder of the postwar period. Many victims in this period, in fact, epitomized the elements directing and aspiring to the various kinds of change—in a sense, chaos—of postwar Taiwanese society. Such local struggles began escalating immediately following the end of World War II, in August 1945, which meant in Taiwan, the demise of Japanese colonialism for the first time since the end of the nineteenth century.

As many memoirs and oral histories suggest, the end of the Japanese colonialism came with much joy and optimism for the future of Taiwan. Chen Mingzhong, a 16-year-old student, for instance, had been frustrated with the discrimination between the Japanese and Taiwanese, and, thus, was excited about the arrival of GMD forces in the fall of 1945, hoping for the beginning of a new era and new society where people would be treated equally, a realization of Sun Wen’s *Sanmin zhuyi* [Three Principles of the People]—the principles of self-determination,

⁷⁸ Wang Huan, *Liehuo de qingchun: Wuling niandai baise kongbu zhengyan* (Taipei, Taiwan: Renjian chubanshe, 1999), 124-25; Lin Shuzhi, *Baise kongbu X dangan* (Taipei, Taiwan: Qianwei chubanshe, 1997), 24.

of democracy, and of livelihood.⁷⁹ Chen Minzhong's hope, however, crumbled quickly as he found that many GMD soldiers and Chinese who had just come to Taiwan from the mainland tended to look down on local population as "slaves" of Japanese colonialism, causing numerous local conflicts between the Chinese and the local population.⁸⁰ A sentence that described the disappointment of the people in Taiwan in this period was: "*Gou qu zhu lai* [Dog has gone, pig has come]."⁸¹

The legacy of Japanese colonialism complicated such local conflicts. With the "return" to China, use of the Japanese language was suddenly forbidden in 1946, followed by a series of policies banning Japanese songs, books, newspapers, films, and literature in the public space in Taiwan. As a result, millions of Taiwanese, particularly those under fifty years old who had been using the Japanese since they were born, had to start over again and learn Mandarin.⁸² This was particularly the case for social elites in Taiwan. Worse still, the collapse of the Japanese empire touched off the breakdown of the Taiwanese economy as well as a food crisis, and such situations brought about growth in the unemployment rate and increases in pick-pocketing, theft, and robbery, causing social unrest, particularly in urban areas. With this deterioration of public security, many urban residents set up gratings on windows, multiple locks on doors, and high walls around their houses.⁸³

Frustrations among local people mounted as the postwar situations grew worse as the Nationalist government suppressed demonstrations, labor strikes, and

⁷⁹ Chen Mingzhong, an interview in Lan Bozhou ed., *Gaoxiong xian er er ba ji wuling niandai baise kongbu minzhong shi*, 328-30; Wang Huan, *Liehuo de qingchun*, 49-54; Qiu Guozhen, 166-67.

⁸⁰ Suemitsu Kin'ya, *Taiwan gekidou no sengoshi: 228 jiken to sono zengo* [Taiwan's Turbulent Postwar History: Before and After the 2.28 Incident] (Taipei, Taiwan: Jillion, 2006), 54-56.

⁸¹ Ibid, 56-58.

⁸² Ibid, 70-74.

⁸³ Ibid, 66.

various kinds of demands from the Taiwanese in 1946. Such resentments eventually provoked the eruption of a popular anti-Nationalist revolt all over Taiwan in the spring of 1947—the February 28 Incident, which began with small quarrels and fights between lower-ranking Nationalist officials and local residents in Taipei on February 27.⁸⁴

This section does not have space to discuss the process, scale, and causes and effects of the incident, but, while beginning with a small incident, it eventually grew into a series of popular mass revolts against the Nationalist government, and, more generally, against *Waishengren*, the newly arriving Chinese. At that time, the total population of *Benshengren*, or Taiwanese, was about 6.5 million, in contrast to about 60,000 *Waishengren*, or Chinese.⁸⁵ In the first few days, thus, local rebellions were quite successful; local people attacked governmental offices, killed quite a few *Waishengren*, and even occupied a radio station in Taipei, to broadcast anti-Nationalist speeches, presenting slogans such as “Defeat greedy officials,” “Stand against the evil of the Chinese,” “Autonomy for Taiwan,” and so on, which, again, touched off waves of uprisings in many cities and towns in the central and southern parts of Taiwan.⁸⁶ However, with the arrival of the GMD armies from the mainland in a week, the popular uprisings were literally crushed, with numerous cruel massacres in all major cities, causing the death of more than twenty thousand Taiwanese.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Ibid, 81-83.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 80.

⁸⁶ Ibid, 89-138; Qiu Guozhen, 77-78.

⁸⁷ Suemitsu, *Taiwan gekidō no sengoshi*, 138-149; Qiu Guozhen, 79-80.

Nevertheless, the brutal suppression of revolts in the spring of 1947 did not silence resistance, nor did it “solve” conflicts in society; rather, it intensified them. As a matter of fact, the 2.28 incident marked a turning point. After that, anti-government sentiments rapidly pervaded and became more popular, and, as a result of the GMD’s repression, many put faith in leftist thought as a means of opposing the Nationalist government.⁸⁸ As on the mainland as we have seen in the first chapter, the youth—in particular, college students—took a lead in spreading leftist agendas in Taiwan in the late 1940s.⁸⁹ Zhang Dongcai, a 20-year-old man in Taipei, for instance, was shocked by the military suppression of revolts in 1947, and, like his friends, began avidly reading progressive magazines sent from Hong Kong and the mainland; he wrote in his diary on July 24, 1948: “I don’t mind not eating any food for three days if I can read *Guancha* [Observation].”⁹⁰ As student movements spread like wildfire at universities on the mainland, college students in Taiwan, especially those at National Taiwan University, intensified their activities immediately following the February 28 incident. Maintaining a strong critique of the Nationalist government, student movements in Taiwan became revitalized in the spring of 1949, including students from universities and high schools not only in Taipei but also other major cities, with slogans, such as “Opposing policemen hitting people,” “Anti-starvation,” “Anti-civil war,” and so forth.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Lin Shuyang, *Cong 228 dao wushi niandai*, 141.

⁸⁹ Xu Jinfu, “Zuoqing zhishi qingnian de suqing [The elimination of left-leaning young intellectuals]” in Zhang and Chen ed. *Jieyan shiqi baise kongbu yu zhuanxing zhengyi lunwen ji*, 98.

⁹⁰ Wang Huan, *Liehuo de qingchun: Wu ling niandai baise kongbu zhengyan* [Burning Youth: Testimony of the White Terror in the 1950s], 5.

⁹¹ Lu Zhaolin, an interview in *Jieyan shiqi Taipei diqu zhengshi anjian*, 620-22.

Another stream of thought that gained popularity following the 2.28 incident was the call for independence, or autonomy, of Taiwan. Huang Guanghai, a 23-year-old GMD soldier when he fled to Taiwan in 1950, who came to sympathize with the Taiwanese and was later arrested, recalled: "Because it was clear by that time that the Japanese were not good and the Chinese were not good, either, then, the best way was the independence of Taiwan. Not governed by the Japanese, nor governed by the Chinese."⁹² In fact, the years following the 2.28 incident observed a surge in various activities and demands relating to the independence, or autonomy, of Taiwan. With the growth of student movements, a newsletter, *Xin Taiwan* [New Taiwan], began publication in April of 1949 at National Taiwan University, advocating democracy and autonomy for Taiwan.⁹³ During this period, in Jiayi and Taizhong in the central part of Taiwan, where some of the hardest battles were fought in the 2.28 incident, for example, many youth formed and participated in various associations circa 1948, urging residents in Taiwan to see true natures of the Nationalist government, and insisting on autonomy.⁹⁴ In a similar manner, in 1949, Watan Tang [Lin Shaoming in Chinese], a 19-year-old student, and his friends formed an association that insisted on self-help and high-level autonomy for the native Taiwanese population, such as the Atayal (Taiyal), living in mountainous areas.⁹⁵

⁹² Huang Guanghai, an interview in *Jieyan shiqi Taibei diqu zhengshi anjian*, 652.

⁹³ Xu jinfa, 135.

⁹⁴ Qiu Guozhen, 180-181, and 258-259.

⁹⁵ Ibid, 266-267; Watan Tang (Lin Shaoming), an interview in Kikuchi Kazutaka, "1950 nendai Taiwan hakushoku tero junan no kaioku," *Kindai chugoku kenkyu iho*, vol. 21 (1999), 57-61.

With the development of such currents in post-2.28 Taiwanese society, communist ideology, to be sure, played important roles in providing logic and images of the future. It is important to note, however, that many students and local people who adopted communist agendas did not do so for the sake of Beijing, let alone Moscow. When asked about a motivation for taking part in student movements, Huang Yukun, a teacher at a junior school in Tainan, in the southern part of Taiwan, for instance, said that he was dissatisfied with the government's handling of the 2.28 incident, and that he wanted to improve the lives of the Taiwanese.⁹⁶ In other words, many intellectuals and students, who were arrested in the White Terror in 1950 and following years, participated in student movements and embraced leftist thought in order to use these as useful tools to address their own discontents and resolve local conflicts.

Dissatisfactions of this kind among many people in Taiwan were further exacerbated in 1949, as the Nationalist Party retreated from the mainland to Taiwan. With the arrival of GMD armies, refugees, and their families escalating at 1949, the number of *Waishengren*, newly arriving Chinese, dramatically increased from 60,000 in 1947, to 1 million in 1950, and 1.5 million in the following years, changing the demography of Taiwanese society and, of course, heightening social conflicts at home.⁹⁷ By the time of the outbreak of the Korean War and the escalation of the White Terror in 1950, therefore, the seeds of social conflicts had reached a flash point, a stage in which any slightest provocation could touch off "war" within Taiwanese society.

⁹⁶ Huang Yukun, an interview in *Jieyan shiqi Taipei diqu zhengshi anjian*, 237-40; Xu Jingfa, 128-30.

⁹⁷ Suemitsu, 194-204.

Thinking about the fact that many victims of the White Terror epitomized various modes of change and conflict in postwar Taiwan, it is reasonable to say that we cannot fully grasp the actual nature of the White Terror through the lenses of the Cold War (East-West confrontation), or that of the Chinese Civil War (CCP-GMD confrontation). Rather, the crux of the phenomenon was the tranquilizing of social “disorder” and making of a “harmonious” society, simply put, creating a new nation-state of Nationalist Taiwan through silencing social conflicts and eliminating diverse sorts of malcontents and opponents, however cruel the process.

The Natures and Participants of the White Terror

This point, that the real task had less to do with global and ideological confrontation than the practical process of overcoming social conflicts, becomes much clearer when we look at actual practices the Nationalist Party promoted in this period, along with the evolution of the White Terror. An examination of slogans might be an interesting point to begin. While commonplace slogans of “Return to the Mainland,” “Eliminate Communists,” and “Rescue Our Countrymen” appeared frequently, these slogans usually came with other catchwords, which, actually, often held precedence. A list of slogans in the Wartime Life Movement in the summer of 1950, published in *Minshen Ribao*, for instance, maintained various tasks in this order:

1. Change Social Atmosphere
2. Encourage Wartime Life
3. Restrain Luxury and Extravagance
4. Mobilize People for Production
5. Eliminate Communists

6. Defeat Soviet Imperialism⁹⁸

Note that, even though the entire movement was packaged in the colors of anti-communism and the Cold War, as far as daily practices were concerned, the first four slogans concerned social order and ways of life.

Another list on the same page might be much more telling; it touted ten tasks, all concerned with social order and individual behaviors: “Keep Order,” “Be Punctual,” “Maintain Cleanliness,” “Encourage Production” “No Betting,” “No Alcohol” “No Need for Gorgeous Clothing,” “No need for Sumptuous Parties” and so forth.⁹⁹ Such a tendency clearly appeared in the mind of Chiang Kai-shek, who was preoccupied with creating order at home. When contemplating current tasks and slogans in his diary in late August of 1950, the words that appeared most were “Unity” and “Order,” followed by phrases such as “Obey the Law” and “Observe Rules” and so on.¹⁰⁰

These were not merely rhetorical slogans. As on the mainland, the Nationalist Party promoted several mass campaigns under the umbrella banner of “*Fan-gong kang-E* [Opposing Communists and Resisting Russians]”—a set of movements ostensibly fashioned according to Civil War and Cold War logics. When we look at specific programs, however, we can see actual aims focused on domestic problems. For example, the aforementioned Wartime Life Movement in the summer of 1950 aimed at changing life styles, urging people to avoid luxurious clothing, food, and

⁹⁸ “Kouhao [Slogans],” *Minsheng Ribao*, August 7, 1950, NTU, Taipei, Taiwan.

⁹⁹ “Guili [Disciplines],” *Minsheng Ribao*, August 7, 1950, NTU, Taipei, Taiwan.

¹⁰⁰ Diary, Chiang Kai-shek, August 23, 1950, Box 48, CKSD, Hoover Institute, Stanford University, Stanford, CA.

parties.¹⁰¹ The Campaign to Promote Public Order aimed at improving the people's manner; specific tasks included, for instance, forming a line at bus stops and train stations, and following rules in restaurants, theaters, and public areas, and so on—typical small issues that had created numerous quarrels and fights between the newly arriving Chinese and local residents.¹⁰²

The third mass movement that was enacted in December 1951 is noteworthy: the Campaign to Improve Hygiene, in which the Nationalist government instructed local district offices to be watchful of environmental hygiene in their cities and towns. Specific programs included, for example, cleaning-up of trash, sanitation control in restaurants and bars, and education and inspection by officials.¹⁰³ Chiang Kai-shek himself took the trouble to give lengthy instruction concerning improvement of hygiene. He said:

Environmental hygiene is the basis of social reform. Now, people outside Taiwan are paying attention to us, and thus we need to take special notice of social reform. From now on, police need to look out for the cleanliness of restaurants, bars, theaters, and hotels, in particular, toilets and kitchens of these places, which should be inspected time to time to promote the improvement of hygiene.¹⁰⁴

It is interesting to note that all of these slogans and campaigns, which were primarily concerned with individual life and social order, were justified and promoted by the logics of the Civil War and Cold War; it was claimed, for instance, that these were tasks all necessary to rescue those “left” on the mainland, and to

¹⁰¹ *Minsheng ribao*, August 7, 1950.

¹⁰² Hui Xunhui, (2000), 45-46.

¹⁰³ Quoted in Hui Xunhui, 44-45.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

support the fight on the frontlines. “Everything,” it was urged, “should serve the frontlines and the victory there.”¹⁰⁵

Logic of this kind was most useful for rulers because it could quickly and efficiently silence opponents and malcontents under the cry of achieving a higher goal. “Let’s stop discussing the differences among political factions or occupational posts,” Chiang Kai-shek, in fact, said in April 1951, “Let’s achieve an unfinished Nationalist Revolution through cooperating efforts under the great objective of Opposing Communists and Resisting Russians.”¹⁰⁶ Taking full advantage of the utility of this logic, the Nationalist Party government quickly enacted a series of laws, one after another, during the Korean War period: the Wartime Regulation to Purge Spies in 1950; the Law to Stimulate the Arrest of Spies in 1951; the Law Concerning Self-Surrender of Communists in 1951; and the Platform for the Mobilization of the Opposing Communism and Resisting Russians Movement in 1952, to name a few.¹⁰⁷

Following the Marshall Law and the Regulation for Suppression of Rebellion, both enacted in 1949, these legal measures functioned to marginalize and eliminate dissenters’ voices, and contributed to the stabilization of social order and consolidation of the Nationalist Party’s footholds. At a glance, it is thus reasonable to view Nationalist Party leaders—in particular, Chiang Kai-shek—as primary architects and executors of the White Terror with the goal of making a “conflict-free” nation-state of Nationalist Taiwan. Therefore, it makes sense that the majority of, if

¹⁰⁵ “Zhenshi shenghua yungdong [The Wartime Life Movement],” *Mingsheng ribao*, August 7, 1950, NTU, Taipei, Taiwan.

¹⁰⁶ Chiang Kai-shek, April 3, 1951, No. 132-142, Dengshiguan [Nationalist Party Archives], Taipei, Taiwan.

¹⁰⁷ Qiu Guozhen, 132; Hui Xunhui, 138-39, 171-72.

not all, existing literature focuses, critically, on the roles played by the party. Nonetheless, it would be hasty to conclude that the party was the sole culprit. There were other less noticeable, and thus less well understood actors in the entire phenomenon called the White Terror: the quiet mass of people.

In fact, the making of “consensus” in society is not just beneficial for the rulers of the society, but also agreeable and even attractive for a large number of ordinary people, particularly those belonging to the majority. In the case of the White Terror, people’s participation was observable in two ways. First, as in the case of mainland China, quite a few people actively participated in diverse activities, such as cooperating and joining in mass campaigns, conducting surveillance, and informing on “suspicious” persons in schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods (Picture 2).¹⁰⁸ The act of informing became common and popular in this period primarily because of a huge amount of reward money, paid to informants.¹⁰⁹ In a similar manner, for instance, one publisher in Taipei held a contest for “anti-communist” literature, calling for novels, articles, songs, poems, and dramas. It soon received more than 1,700 entries.¹¹⁰ The existence of a large number of informants, as well as that of entries to the contest, suggests that many ordinary people were not just passive actors or victims of the terror as usually described, but, to some extent, collaborative participants in the phenomenon.

In addition to such straightforward attendants, there was another kind of “participant” in the White Terror, which might be more characteristic of Taiwan in

¹⁰⁸ Qiu Guozhen, 132; A poster is from *Taiwan shi 100 jian dashi*, 38.

¹⁰⁹ Zhou Kunru, an interview in *Jieyan shiqi Taibei diqu zhengshi anjian*, 593; and Chen Cuilian, 66.

¹¹⁰ *Ziyou Zhongguo mingzhong fangong yundong* (April 1953), 21-24.

this period: those who participated through absence. These people continuously tried not to involve themselves in victims' affairs, deliberately cut off communications and relationships with "suspicious" persons, and chose to withdraw and disconnect themselves from any activities and topics related to politics, attitudes that aided, more than anything else, the continuation of a particular social order under the rule of the Nationalist Party for the nearly four decades that followed.

Family members of "suspicious" persons knew this point well. A mother of one "suspicious" person, for instance, remembered how quickly people changed attitudes and how cold they could be.¹¹¹ Another example is Feng Shoue, who was arrested in 1950 with his elder brother, and had to spend ten years in jail for attending a "suspicious" reading group. When she was released in 1960, she still found it difficult to find a job, to become acclimatized, and to get married because of the label of "rebellious family" that had been placed on her. She soon learned knitting in an attempt to open a knitting store; yet, when her landlord found out her background, she was forced out. It was just like a transfer, she later recollected, from a small prison to a larger prison.¹¹²

In such a larger prison called society, guards were not necessarily GMD officials and supporters, but the mass of people—friends, classmates, colleagues, neighbors, and even oneself—who watched out for words and deeds, consciously and unconsciously avoiding joining in any political issues that might cause trouble—that is, actually, a certain manner of "participation" in politics, which constantly

¹¹¹ Wang Huan, *Liehuo de qingchun*, 53-54.

¹¹² Wang Huan, *Liehuo de qingchun*, 68, and 80-81.

suppressed the seeds of social conflicts, and which contributed to the formation and maintenance of an “orderly” and “harmonious” society for a long time. It was quite reasonable that, in the early- to mid-1980s, when political movements for democratization spread in Taiwan, one slogan involved the overcoming of the “General Headquarters of Public Security in the heart of each individual.”¹¹³

Looking at such an internalized attitude and political culture, one might find the legacy of Japanese colonialism that ruled Taiwan from the end of nineteenth century to 1945. First and foremost, the peculiar mode of such a style of “participation” in politics—that is, participation by nonparticipation—might be seen as the direct legacy of colonialism. Such an attitude had perhaps been quite common among residents in Taiwan under Japanese rule since the end of the nineteenth century, in particular, after diverse activities of resistance were crushed.¹¹⁴ Second, more importantly, the demise of the Japanese Empire meant, in Taiwan and other parts of Asia, the beginning of a process of decolonization. For the ruling circles, this was, at the same time, a process of re-colonization on their own terms. Yet, even for ordinary people, the production of social order through rulers’ re-colonization could be less detestable than constant divisions and disputes—in a sense, war—at home, which appeared in the aftermath of World War II.

Viewed in this was, what happened in the White Terror in Taiwan in the early 1950s was not just an end result, a stationary state, caused by the Cold War. Rather, it was a continuous process of re-colonization—nation-state building of

¹¹³ Wakabayashi, 101; Tamura Shizue, *Hijō jōshi no hito bito: Taiwan to Nihon no uta* [The People of Hijo-joshi: Songs of Taiwan and Japan] (Tōkyō: Shōbunsha, 1992), 162-63; Lin Shuyang, 137; and Lan Bozhou, 48.

¹¹⁴ Qiu Guozhen, 16-37; Suemitsu, 22-28.

Nationalist Taiwan—in the aftermath of a chaotic postwar period, with wide and regular participation—if that included participation by absence—of nameless, numberless people in society. The Cold War, here, did not appear as a cause of the phenomenon as often described, but, rather, a necessary condition that enabled the process of “overcoming” social and cultural wars in postwar Taiwan. And, thus, an imagined reality of the global Cold War was continuously imagined and required to exist as the “reality” of the world in order to create and then maintain order at home.

The Philippines: Rethinking the Crackdown on “Un-Filipino Activities”

Such a pattern might not be particularly unique to Taiwan. Like many other places in Asia in the postwar period, the Philippines, for example, entered into a situation almost like a civil war immediately following the end of World War II. Even before the return of U.S. forces to the islands, diverse anti-Japanese guerrillas had liberated many areas, already beginning to administrate cities and towns in those areas on their own terms. The largest among many was the *Hukbalahap*, or the Huks, the People’s Anti-Japanese Liberation Army, which developed during wartime, bringing together communists, reformers, professionals, intellectuals, the middle class, workers, and, above all, peasants, in hailing anti-Japanese resistance, land reform and social justice.¹¹⁵ As historian Vina A. Lanzona describes, however, the Huks not only challenged the government, but also questioned dominant social values, particularly involving gender, in Philippine society.¹¹⁶ The participation of

¹¹⁵ Benedict J. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines* (2002 [1977]); Suzuki Sizuo, *Firipin no rekishi* [A History of the Philippines] (2008 [1997]).

¹¹⁶ Vina A. Lanzona, *Amazons of the Huk Rebellion: Gender, Sex, and Revolution in the Philippines*

women in the Huks during World War II changed traditional images and roles of women, challenging conventional norms concerning what women should and should not do. In other words, what the Huks represented was a challenge toward not only political but also social conditions.¹¹⁷

The popularity of the Huks increased in the late 1940s, eventually touching off a large-scale revolt, later known as the Huk Rebellion, which reached its zenith in 1949 and 1950.¹¹⁸ This uprising, however, was subdued quickly in the fall of 1950 and months that followed with a change in the logic involved in describing the situation under the Cold War terms, and with the beginning of the crackdown on “Un-Filipino” activities. On the morning of October 20, 1950, for instance, government intelligence officers simultaneously raided twenty-two places in the capital of the Philippines, Manila, arresting more than a hundred “communists,” including a 15-year-old boy and 18-year-old girl.¹¹⁹ They were arrested for being members of “communist-inspired Hukbalahap,” allegedly plotting the overthrow of the government and the conquest of the world under the direction of Moscow.¹²⁰ In line with these raids, conservative outlawed the communist party in the Philippines in October 1950. A Governor of Pampanga, Jose Lingad, urged: “I believe that in view of the grave international situation, it is no longer untimely to propose that we outlaw the Communists and the Hukbalahap organizations.”¹²¹

(2009), 7-14.

¹¹⁷ Ibit, 265.

¹¹⁸ Kerkvliet, 210.

¹¹⁹ Memorandum, Manila to Foreign Office, UK, “Trial of twenty-six members of the Communist Party of the Philippines on May 12th,” May 28, 1951, in FO371/92932: “Internal Affairs in the Philippines; outlawing of the Communist Party,” BNA, Kew, UK.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ “Report on the Illegality of the Communist Party of the Philippines,” published by the Special

With the dispatch of Philippine troops to Korea in the fall of 1950, “anti-communist” organizations were on the rise in Philippine society in the months that followed. An umbrella association, the “Anti-Communist League of the Philippines” was organized in 1951, claiming to represent 90,000 members of nineteen organizations, and individuals including veterans, business, religious, and patriotic groups of Filipinos, as well as foreign nationals such as Americans and Britons—a traditional groups of ruling circles.¹²² Describing the Korean War as the forefront of the East-West battle, these “anti-communist” organizations urged Filipinos to learn of the “shocking crimes of Communism in the Philippines.”¹²³ With the establishment of the “Special Committee on Un-Filipino Activities,” which was modeled after the “House Un-American Activities Committee,” diverse forces of nonconformists and anti-government groups were subdued in the name of the Cold War.¹²⁴

The Huks, in particular, suffered a fatal blow, and were eventually wiped out by the mid-1950s. First and foremost, as Benedict Kerkvliet points out, many participants in peasant and guerrilla movements did want to see the realization of agrarian reform and social justice, but did not desire the overthrow or elimination

Committee on Un-Filipino Activities, May 15, 1951, in F0371/92933: “Internal Affairs in the Philippines; outlawing of the Communist Party,” BNA, Kew, UK.

¹²² “Report on the Functions of the Special Committee on Un-Filipino Activities,” published by the Special Committee on Un-Filipino Activities, May 15, 1951, in F0371/92933: “Internal Affairs in the Philippines; outlawing of the Communist Party,” BNA, Kew, UK.

¹²³ Memorandum, Manila to Foreign Office, UK, “Trial of twenty-six members of the Communist Party of the Philippines on May 12th,” May 28, 1951, in F0371/92932: “Internal Affairs in the Philippines; outlawing of the Communist Party,” BNA, Kew, UK.

¹²⁴ “Report on the Functions of the Special Committee on Un-Filipino Activities,” published by the Special Committee on Un-Filipino Activities, May 15, 1951, in F0371/92933: “Internal Affairs in the Philippines; outlawing of the Communist Party,” BNA, Kew, UK.

of the government, let alone any alleged control from Moscow.¹²⁵ Thus, when discussions of social and cultural conflicts were covered by questions of national and international affairs, many stopped discussing social problems, for the protection of the “nation,” efficiently suppressing elements of social changes in postwar Philippine society. Within a few years, thus, the challenge represented by the Huks against conventional political and social conditions was silenced, under the call for “unity.”

Indeed, the logic of the Cold War functioned quite well both in silencing domestic disputes and calling for unity. “The Philippines now stands at the cross-roads,” said Judge Castelo in a courtroom in Manila in May 1951. “If the Philippines is awake, it will survive the deadly communist conspiracy in its midst. If not, it will suffer the fate of all gullible and communist-indoctrinated nations in the world.”¹²⁶ Referring to the alleged international situations, the Judge then called for the unity among the people.

It now becomes the duty of all loyal Filipino citizens, regardless of their creed and political affiliations, to bind themselves together and join the vast movement of freedom-loving peoples of the world in combating Communism in its fundamental principles and purposes.¹²⁷

This was the logic used frequently in the Philippines and other places in this period. Ostensibly, unity among nations was a method to achieve a goal of fighting against communism. Yet, actually, method and goal were in reverse; unity was not merely a

¹²⁵ Kerkvliet, 254-56.

¹²⁶ Memorandum, Manila to Foreign Office, UK, “Trial of twenty-six members of the Communist Party of the Philippines on May 12th,” May 28, 1951, in FO371/92932: “Internal Affairs in the Philippines; outlawing of the Communist Party,” BNA, Kew, UK.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

method but itself a goal, and fighting Communism was not the aim but a process to achieve unity.

Such a reverse in logic, indeed, was a common feature in the social and political repressions we have seen in this chapter—those occurring in Korean, Chinese, Taiwanese, and Filipino societies simultaneously during the Korean War. At a glance, it makes sense to see such calls for “unity” in places just experiencing the processes of decolonization following the demise of the Japanese Empire. As we have seen, brutal suppressions in these societies, in fact, occurred at a crossroads between state mobilization for their re-colonization projects and popular participation in seeking their own “orderly” and “harmonious” societies. Thus, we may regard such brutal repressions as unique phenomena occurring only in newly developing—in many cases, totalitarian—states in Asia. When we take a global perspective, however, we see that such is not the case. As a matter of fact, the aforementioned reverse of logic was ubiquitous at that time, and, more importantly, similar social and political repressions occurred simultaneously in other parts of the world, such as Japan, Britain, and the United States.

Chapter 6 Pictures:

Picture 1-1:

"Pudong yangsiqu tudi gaige douzheng [A mass meeting of
land reform struggle against landlords at the Yangsi district in Pudong]"

Shanghai, PRC

1951

H1-23-33-29

Shanghai Municipal Archives, Shanghai, PRC



Picture 1-2:

"Shanghai shi xinchengqu Fan laotai zai zhenya fangeming dahui shang kongsu eba Jin Tuozi dui ta de pohai zuixing [Mrs. Fan accusing a local despot Jin Tuozi of his crime of suppressing her at a mass meeting of the suppression of counterrevolutionaries in the Xincheng district in Shanghai].

1951

Shanghai, PRC

H1-23-33-33

Shanghai Municipal Archives, Shanghai, PRC



Picture 2:

“Arresting Spies and You will Get a Massive Reward”

In Li, Xiaofeng. *Taiwan shi 100 jian da shi*
[100 Major Events in the History of Taiwan]
Vol. 2 (Taipei, Taiwan: Yushan she, 1999), 38



Chapter 7: “Enemies Within Our Gates”

Europe is like a besieged town. Fever is raging. Whoever will not rave like the rest is suspected. And In these hurried times when justice cannot wait to study evidence, every suspect is a traitor. Whoever insists, in the midst of war, on defending peace among men knows that he risks his own peace, his reputation, his friends, for his belief.¹

Romain Rolland, “Our Neighbor The Enemy” (1915)

Brutal repression during the Korean War period was not limited to postcolonial societies, which were in a process of nation building, with a need to create order and unity through eliminating thousands of “others” within society. Purges of similarly massive scales, while differing in degrees of violence, occurred in former-colonial countries at the same time, ostensibly as manifestations of the politics of anti-communism that explosively flared up in the fall of 1950: the Red Purge in Japan, the increase in anti-strike and anti-labor waves in Britain, and McCarthyism in the United States. Were there any similarities between these suppressions and those in postcolonial societies? Why did they occur all at once? As in the cases of China, Taiwan, and the Philippines, these phenomena have customarily been treated as separate occurrences, and viewed through a Cold War lens, and, thus, often described as end results of the global confrontation on the ground. Examining them in this way, it is no wonder that existing literature tended to consolidate, rather than question, the conventional notions of the Cold War.

In an effort to raise questions about this framework, itself, however, this chapter revisits these domestic purges in order to reconsider the meanings of such

¹ Romain Rolland, “Our Neighbor The Enemy,” in *Above the Battle* (1916), 141-42.

events that simultaneously escalated in this short time period. As in the previous chapter, the primary focus, here, is to reassess the meaning of these suppressions through tracing what happened within societies, rather than prioritizing investigations of power holders' intentions. This is because, once we approach a social phenomenon through the examination of social and political elites, we are apt not to consider its meaning, since such is often confused with those elites' intentions. Thus, this chapter instead looks into each society, itself, paying attention to the social mechanisms of suppression. The simple question to be raised here is: Who purged whom for what purpose?

One might raise doubts about the manner of treating equally, for instance, McCarthyism in the United States and the Suppression of Counterrevolutionaries in China, because they were *different* in many ways. However, such a notion that they were utterly and inherently distinct is exactly what this study attempts to challenge. Understanding the many important differences among and between these suppressions, this study shows certain similarities through analyzing and examining the social and local functions of these purges. In doing this, this chapter maintains that the series of domestic purges in this period was not so much characteristic of a particular ideology or regime, but had more to do with a simultaneous worldwide phenomenon, based on shared experiences of postwar situations. As we will discuss at the end of this chapter, such purges functioned for the purpose of "protecting" society, and the notion of the Cold War played important roles. What become clear are, thus, not just the imagined nature of the Cold War, but the social needs of such

imagination in many places in the postwar world. Let us begin to examine the massive purge that escalated in Japan during the Korean War.

Japan: Reconsidering the “Red Purge”

At 3 pm on July 28, 1950, thirty-one workers at *Mainichi Shinbun* [Mainichi Newspaper] in Tokyo were called to their bosses’ offices, most individually, and told that they were fired, on the spot. The only reason they were given was that the news media had an important responsibility in driving out communists and communist sympathizers from the company. The same notification was conveyed simultaneously at other major newspaper companies, such as *Asahi* and *Yomiuri*. These were a few of numerous cases of mass dismissals at companies, schools, and governmental offices carried out in the summer and fall of 1950, during which roughly 13,000 people were fired—a phenomenon commonly known as the “Red Purge” in Japan.

As the naming suggests, the waves of mass dismissals have been viewed conventionally through a Cold War lens. The traditional understanding is that this was a purge of communists and communist sympathizers, primarily conducted under orders from the General Headquarters (GHQ), the U.S. Occupation Headquarters in Tokyo. Given such a presumption, interestingly, or strangely, there has not been so much discussion of *who* actually planned and conducted this so-called Red Purge. In the existing literature, as historian Hans Martin Kramer points out, the answer has been almost taken for granted.² It was the Americans. It was the

² Hans Martin Kramer, “Just Who Reversed the Course? The Red Purge in Higher Education during

GHQ and Washington. Their purpose in the Red Purge was, it is commonly argued, to make Japan a fortress against the threat of Soviet expansionism in East Asia. However, through examination of the so-called Red Purge, this section questions the conventional narrative, suggesting that we are missing something important by perceiving this phenomenon as the “Red” Purge.

The practice of firing employees, of course, was not a new phenomenon, but it did not reach its peak until the summer of 1950, primarily because of the existence of powerful opposition. In an extreme case, occurring in Nagano in early 1950, a worker received notifications of dismissal seventy times, but could fight back because of strong support from labor union members.³ Such a case is rare but still understandable in view of the enormous influence of labor and leftist movements in postwar Japan. The event that changed this was the outbreak of the Korean War on June 25, 1950, which affected both radicals’ and conservatives’ ways of thinking, decisively changing the social and political environment of the postwar period.

Immediately following the outbreak of the Korean War, apprehensions grew among the ruling circles in Japan. What they worried about was not so much a direct Soviet attack, but an alleged internal danger: a “red menace” at home. One declassified document shows, for example, that a military official personally warned Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru that, if the war spread to Japan, it would be guerrilla warfare, and guerrilla riots led by “Red Japanese” would occur everywhere in the

the Occupation of Japan,” *Social Science Japan Journal* (November 2004), 1-18.

³ Fujikawa Yoshitaro, oral interview in Kawanishi Hirosuke, *Kikigaki: Densan no gunzo* [Oral Recollections: Figures in the All Japan Electricity Workers Union] (Tokyo: Heigensha, 1992), 244.

country, creating a nationwide threat with which the newly established National Police Reserve would not be able to cope.⁴ Conservative politicians had been particularly worried about leftists' nation-wide networks and organizations that could disturb the social order.⁵ Yoshida, likewise, was concerned that radicals' riots would influence even the fate of his administration.⁶

Conservatives' anxiety of this kind was certainly exaggerated, but not altogether mistaken in view of the popularity of leftist thought in postwar Japan. In the summer of 1950, radicals in Japan happily spread rumors that the People's Liberation Army was coming, and that the same pattern of revolution would occur in Japan near future.⁷ Such a mood took on an air of "truth" due to the social unrest prevailing in Japan in the late 1940s and the first half of 1950, with numerous clashes between labor unions and police forces in many parts of the country.⁸ A renowned Japanese intellectual, Takeuchi Yoshimi nicely summarized the air of the period. He wrote:

In 1950, war and revolution was not prediction but reality. The People's Republic of China was established in the previous year, and the Korean War occurred in that year. Many believed a revolution in Japan was inevitable. I wonder that no one at that time expected tranquility ten years hence.

Furthermore, the shift in the Japanese Communist Party (JCP)'s platform from a moderate to an aggressive course—a drastic shift occurring in early 1950 as a result

⁴ "Meguro gaisho kantei ni okeru yushikisha kaigo [Memo on the Advisory Committee Meeting at the Official Residence of the Foreign Ministry in Meguro]," October 5, 1950, *Nihon Gaiko Bunsho: Heiwa jiyoyaku; Taibei Kosho [Documents on Japanese Foreign Policy: Treaty of Peace with Japan; Negotiation with the US]* (hereafter *NGB: Negotiation with the US*), (Tokyo, 2007), 41.

⁵ "Problems in the Various Reforms for the Democratization of Japan," November 9, 1950, *NGB: Negotiation with the US*, 85.

⁶ Yoshida Shigeru, *Kaiso Junen [Reminiscence of the Ten-Years]* Vol. 2 (Tokyo, 1957), 260-78.

⁷ Letter, Chiba Kiyoshi to Ashida Hitoshi, Papers of Ashida Hitoshi (hereafter PAH), Correspondence File, No. 266. National Diet Library (hereafter NDL), Tokyo, Japan; *Asahi Shinbun*, July 5, 1950.

⁸ Kawanishi, *Kikigaki [Oral Recollections]*, 273.

of Moscow's critique concerning the JCP's unique course of "peaceful revolution"—strengthened the plausibility of the scenario. It was such a context—rising fears and hopes provided by the Korean War—that prepared a social atmosphere to make the escalation of mass firings much easier.

The first wave of mass dismissals occurred in the newspaper industry. Immediately following the outbreak of the Korean War, General MacArthur issued an statement, declaring a need to remove communists in the newspaper industries, who were "inciting the irresponsible and lawless minority elements of society to oppose law, disturb order, and subvert the general welfare."⁹ Based on this announcement, fifty newspaper companies nationwide unilaterally notified a total of 704 employees that they were being terminated. These ranged from major newspapers like *Asahi Shinbun* (104 dismissed among 5,200 staff), *Mainichi Shinbun* (49 among 5,000), and *Yomiuri Shinbun* (34 among 2,200) to small local newspapers such as *Nihonkai Shinbun* (9 among 90) at Tottori, as well as *Shinyo Shinbun* (1 among 50) at Matsumoto, Nagano.¹⁰

Many, of course, refused to accept sudden termination and tried to continue to fight. Some simply went to their workplaces, but were forcefully removed by security guards and plainclothes policemen. Others sought help from unions at their companies, but, in many cases, were almost completely ignored. Still others took the matter to court, but many of their cases were turned down, as most courts

⁹ Sodei Rinjiro ed., *Yoshida Shigeru – Makkasa ofuku shokanshu 1945-1951 [The Collection of Correspondence between Yoshida Shigeru and MacArthur 1945-1951]* (Tokyo, 2000), English side, 205-6.

¹⁰ *1950-nen 7-gatsu 28-nichi: Asahi Shinbunsha no reddo paji shogenroku [July 28, 1950: The Collection of Testimonies about the Red Purge at the Asahi Newspaper]* (Tokyo, 1981), 28-29. Also, Hirata Tetsuo, *Reddo paji no shiteki kyumei [Historical Inquiring into the Red Purge]* (Tokyo, 2002), 214.

concluded that they did not have jurisdiction over MacArthur's orders during the occupation.¹¹ But what most severely and effectively discouraged discharged persons from continuing to fight, according to many persons' recollections, was the abrupt changes in attitudes of their colleagues, union members, and personal friends. "I felt I suddenly became a person with an infectious disease. Everyone stopped talking to me," said a female worker at *Asahi Shinbun*, Kuboi Mitsuko, who had just been dismissed. She remembered that her colleagues literally turned their faces away when she happened to meet them.¹²

The Spread of Mass Firing in the Fall of 1950

The wave of mass dismissals that first became serious in the newspaper industry spread to ordinary companies at a much larger scale in the fall of 1950, in industries including coal, steel, shipbuilding, chemistry, railways, mining, and so on.¹³ We still don't know the exact number of dismissal, but at least 13,000 employees were laid off at this time. As historian Miyake Akimasa points out, the scale of the Red Purge is difficult to measure because small businesses and companies were, from the beginning, excluded from statistics.¹⁴ These waves of mass firings were deemed the "Red Purge," and the common understanding was

¹¹ Similar experiences can be found in various court documents, such as in charge sheets, which are kept in the Collection of Red Purge Documents in the Ohara Shakai Mondai Kenkyujo [The Ohara Institute for Social Studies] (hereafter OISS) in Hosei University, Tokyo. A group of discharged persons in *Yomiuri*, *Mainichi*, and *Asahi*, for instance, sued the company, and their statements described these struggles; for these companies, see Files No. 20-5. Also, see various testimonies in *1950-nen 7-gatsu 28-nichi [July 28, 1950] [July 28, 1950: The Collection of Testimonies about the Red Purge at the Asahi Newspaper]* (Tokyo, 1981),

¹² See, for example, court documents in the Collection of Red Purge Documents in the OISS. Also, see *1950 nen 7 gatsu 28 nichi [July 28, 1950]*, 66 and 132.

¹³ "Shakai undo tsushin [Newsletters for Social Movements]," November 1, 1950, Collections of Journals, OISS, Hosei University, Tokyo, Japan.

¹⁴ Miyake Akimasa, *Reddo paji to wa nani ka* [What was the Red Purge?] (Tokyo, 1994), 7-10.

that they were planned and conducted by the United States in order to create an anti-communist country in East Asia.

However, once we look the situation carefully, the mass firings of 1950 seem more than just a Red Purge. It is important to note that the second wave of the Red Purge was essentially different from the first. Clearly keeping the Korean War in mind, the earlier Red Purge aimed at picking off “communists,” however vague the meaning of that term, and was based on MacArthur’s statement; the second wave, on the other hand, was carried out based on judgments of each company, and targeted anything “destructive” to the company.¹⁵ In terms of the second waves of mass terminations in other industries, there was no single order issued by the GHQ. In essence, the mass dismissals in those companies, which resulted in the termination of more than 13,000 workers, were planned, conducted, and maintained through judgments of each company, and each had its own reasoning and criteria for who should be let go and why.

One criterion, compiled by the largest mining company in Japan, *Mitsui Miike Coal Mine*, shows how diverse the objects of this “Red Purge” were. The long list of twenty-two itemized categories targeted not only communists, party members, and those who had left or been removed from the party, but also various kinds of “sympathizers” who, for example, had tried to help those who were fired. It targeted even those who could “possibly” behave in such a way, or “possibly” hinder the company’s operations.¹⁶ With criteria so broad and vague, how did this second wave

¹⁵ “Redo paji kanshi [Brief History of Red Purge],” Collections of Documents related to the Red Purge, No. 17-4, OISS, Hosei University, Tokyo.

¹⁶ “Shakei undo tsushin [Newsletters for Social Movements],” October 25, 1950, Collections of

of mass dismissals function on the ground? Observing the development of the “Red Purge,” the Labor Division of the GHQ warned that it must not be mixed up with the rationalization of companies.¹⁷ Various archival documents show, however, that the actual practice of this “Red Purge” was not limited to the termination of “communists”; more often, it was utilized in various and local ways, as an excuse.

The Case of *Nippon Kokan* [Japan Steel Tube Company]

Take one small case as an example: that of *Nippon Kokan* [Nippon Steel Tube Company], which fired 190 workers in the fall of 1950. The dispute began with the announcement of the company president, Kawata Shige, on October 23, stating that he was compelled to discharge workers “who hindered the smooth operation of the company’s business or refused to cooperate with the company.”¹⁸ However, if this is a criteria for firing “communists and communist sympathizers,” the company could dismiss almost anyone it did not like, couldn’t it? In the case of this company, that’s what happened.

Even GHQ officials, often considered operators of the “Red Purge,” were alarmed, as one staff member in the Labor Division described the trend as an “abuse of the Red Purge.”¹⁹ The Chief of the Division, Robert Amis, for example, warned the management of *Nippon Kokan*:

What I have said before is not being followed by the management. It seems to me that the management is taking advantage. Concrete reasons for dismissal should be given. If reasons for dismissal cannot be cited correctly, defer the discharge. When a

Journals, OISS, Hosei University, Tokyo. Also, see Miyake, *Reddo paji to wa nani ka*, 87-88.

¹⁷ “Mr. Kaite’s Comments on the ‘Red Expulsion,’” September 23, 1950, File 11, Box 5, Papers of Valery Burati (hereafter PVB), Wayne State University (hereafter WSU), Detroit, MI.

¹⁸ “The Announcement of the President,” October 23, 1950, File 12, Box 5, PVB, WSU, Detroit, MI.

¹⁹ Letter, Valery Burati to Philip B. Sullivan, May 10, 1951, File 13, Box 1, PVB, WSU, Detroit, MI.

dismissed employee does not fall under the reason, he should be returned to his post, and wages during his dismissal should be paid.²⁰

The company ignored this warning at this point.

Meanwhile, Ishijima Seiichi, a 27-year-old worker at the company's Tsurumi Plant, wrote a lengthy petition to Robert Amis, asking for help, explaining that, although he was an active union member at his plant, he had never been a communist, nor a communist sympathizer. He appealed that the company disliked him because, as a union member, he had "found many defects in the way the management of the company [was] carried out" and because he "submitted his opinion about the improvement of the management."²¹

Mr. Ishijima's letter, which contained a detailed counterargument to the company's charges, was translated and taken seriously. Amis, then, examined the legitimacy of Ishijima's letter with the help of Japan's Labor Ministry, whose officials interviewed Ishijima and concluded the he was not a communist. Based on this information, Amis met with company officers and urged them to re-employ Ishijima.

This time the company reacted. They invited Mr. Ishijima to a dinner and told him that the company admitted he was not a communist. Yet, they still refused to re-employ him and asked to make a deal, offering him a sum of 250,000 Japanese yen, on condition that he would not challenge the management again before the GHQ or the public.²² Mr. Ishijima was in a tough spot. Having children and a wife, and

²⁰ "Mr. Amis gives warning to the management," October 26, 1950, File 13, Box 5, PVB, WSU, Detroit, MI.

²¹ "Memo for Mr. Amis," January 24, 1951, File 15, Box 5, PVB, WSU, Detroit, MI.

²² Memorandum, "To Mr. Amis," no date, File 15 Box 5, PVB; and "Memo for Mr. Amis," February 8, 1951, File 15 Box 5, PVB, WSU, Detroit, MI.

without a possibility of returning to the company, he apparently accepted this offer. We do not have any further records involving him.

GHQ officials were confused and disturbed by the company's refusal to re-hire Mr. Ishijima, in spite of GHQ's repeated warnings. One Japanese official at the Labor Ministry explained them that, even though he was not a communist, he might be considered some kind of a "trouble-maker" for the company because he had actively criticized the management as one of the founding organizers of a union at his factory in Tsurumi.²³

In fact, it was Japan's Labor Minister, not the GHQ, who, in early October 1950, presented a "guideline" for the Red Purge in companies, and accepted the dismissal of not only members of the Communist Party and fellow-travelers but also "those inveterate active trouble makers, taking leadership roles in activities, inciting others, or being original planners of incitation, thus causing real injury to the safety and peace of the enterprise."²⁴ With this vague definition of "trouble makers," many companies took advantage. Such cases are numerous, as in the case of the *Niigata Tekkosho*, a small iron works in Niigata Prefecture, where three dozen workers, mostly active union members, were fired as "trouble-makers" for being "uncooperative," "disturbing," and "undesirable" elements in the company. One worker noticed that dismissals of workers were especially numerous in groups where labor-management negotiations had been fierce.²⁵

²³ "Memo for Mr. Amis," January 24, 1951, File 15, Box 5, PVB, WSU, Detroit, MI.

²⁴ "Exclusion of Communistic Destructive Elements in Enterprise," no date, File 13, Box 5, PVB; and "Nikkan Rodo Tsushin" [Daily Labor Bulletin], October 18, 1950, File 13, Box 5, PVB, WSU, Detroit, MI.

²⁵ "Niigata Tekkosho File," No. 20-11, Collection of Documents related to the Red Purge, OISS, Hosei University, Tokyo.

Similar conduct can be seen in the case of Japan's major transport company, *Nittsu*. Here, 800 "reds" were fired; many were, actually, guilty only of participating in wildcat strikes earlier in the summer of 1950. In the case of *Dai Nippon Boseki* [Dai Nippon Spinning Company], such a tendency was so conspicuous that Valery Burati, a GHQ official in the Labor Division, described the company as "one of the worst offenders in the field of textiles in taking advantage of [the] 'red purge' to dismiss anti-communists who were, in fact, aggressive union officers."²⁶ As this comment shows, the practice of the "Red Purge" went far beyond the control of the GHQ, developing to cover up what were, in reality, labor and social disputes.

Internal Dispute in Labor Unions

However, it is still simplistic to describe the "Red Purge" simply as a phenomenon in which the management took advantage of the mood to solve labor disputes. This is because struggles were fought, not only between management and the labor, but also among members within labor unions. In the case of *Densan* [All Japan Electric Workers Union], for example, a dispute between, at least on the surface, "communist" and "non-communist" factions had been developing since 1947. This internal dispute culminated at the union's annual conference in Nara in May 1950, which was eventually canceled due to a violent clash between the two factions. Following this incident, the mainstream "non-communist" faction of the union circulated a communiqué, requiring the full membership of approximately 130,000 to re-register, which resulted in the approval of 110,000 members and

²⁶ Letter, Val Burati to Greechhalgh? International Federation of Textile Workers' Association, UK, May 23, 1951, File 13, Box 1, PVB, WSU, Detroit, MI.

refusal from 20,000. When, under the climate of the Red Purge in late August, the management announced the dismissal of 2,137 “key figures” among those who refused to re-register, the labor union accepted it, because they were not “union members” anymore.²⁷

Underneath the image of ideological struggle between “communist” and “non-communist” factions, the crux of the matter, thus, seemed to be a conflict over a sense of belonging. What was really criticized at the time of the factional disputes had less to do with ideological tendencies than a lack of love for their company. The aforementioned statement of the president at *Nippon Kokan* [Japan Steel Piping Company], for instance, criticized a “few workers” under the alleged influence of “outsiders” by specifically pointing them out as those who “always made agitating remarks and acted according to directions given by the outsiders.”²⁸ By the same token, on the side of the labor union, too, similar remarks can be found. For example, Sasaki Rhyosaku, one of the leading figures of *Densan* [All Japan Electric Workers Union] between 1946 and 1952, pointed out a strong attachment to the company among mainstream labor union leaders and members, while disdaining those who did not have such feelings as “communistic folks.”²⁹

Even beyond private enterprise, similar attitudes can be observed. At an elementary school in Gunma Prefecture, for instance, several teachers were fired for various reasons, such as “uncooperative attitudes,” “discord with colleagues,” “criticism of local and national politics,” and so on. As is apparent in these examples,

²⁷ Kawanishi, *Kikigaki* [Oral Recollections], 169, 239-40, 263, 303, and 373.

²⁸ Similar remarks can be found in various statements of “*Densan*” [All Japan Electricity Union] and “*Kawasaki Seitetsu*” [Kawasaki Steel Company] in this period.

²⁹ Sasaki Ryosaku, oral interview in Kawanishi, *Kikigaki* [Oral Recollections], 77.

many cases of the so-called Red Purge actually involved a screening of nonconformists, dissenters, and malcontents within workplaces. In other words, the actual Red Purge of 1950 was not necessarily about ideology, but had more to do with desirable style of “order” and “harmony” in workplaces and society, although it spread with the atmosphere of the Red Scare following the outbreak of the Korean War.

Through connecting with existing local issues, the practice of the Red Purge went further, to a level that Labor Division’s Burati described as the “destruction of labor movements.”³⁰ From these examples, it is reasonable to say that the Red Purge was not simply a product of the GHQ’s direction, despite the common understanding of the phenomenon at that time and since. In fact, William Murcutt, Chief of the Economic and Scientific Section (ESS) told Chief of the Labor Division, Robert Amis, in August 1950 that the “GHQ must not be involved in dismissals.”³¹ Amis recalled years later:

It is a mistake to believe a criticism that I directed the Red Purge. I did not begin it. I believe that it came out from the inside of Japan’s labor unions [...] for they wanted to exclude communist factions. It came neither from the Government Section nor MacArthur; it came from the Japanese themselves. [...]. I got embroiled by leaders of the management and labor. They often invited me to dinner, took pictures, and used it that they were close to me and that I was hoping the Red Purge.³²

Conventionally, historians have been skeptical about Amis’ remark, viewing Amis as feigning ignorance, because scholars have firmly believed in the absolute rule of U.S.

³⁰ Letter, Burati to Sullivan, May 10, 1951, File 13, Box 1, PVB, WSU, Detroit, MI.

³¹ Letter, Burati to Sullivan, September 6, 1950, File 12, Box 1, PVB, WSU, Detroit, MI.

³² Robert Amis, oral interview in Takemae Eiji, *Shogen Nihon senryoshi: GHQ Rodoka no gunzo* [Oral Testimonies of the Occupation of Japan: The Figures in the Labor Division in the GHQ] (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1983), 324-25.

occupation power in Japan.³³ This view, of course, has a certain merit; after all, the GHQ intervened at various critical moments, such as the dismissal of “communists” in the newspaper industry. Nonetheless, Amis’ recollection does not seem like a mere fraud. In fact, this is the period when the GHQ gradually lost its special aura of the Occupation of Japan. Through the development of the Red Purge, the American officers experienced being ignored and used by Japanese actors, and many realized, as Burati wrote in a personal letter, “the Occupation [had] gone to seed.”³⁴ The Japanese politicians and labor leaders likewise had been learning about this tendency, and realized that they could negotiate, or even flatly reject, the GHQ’s “orders.”³⁵

Through connecting with internal, existing struggles on the ground, the waves of the Red Purge spread widely, in spite of the intention of SCAP officials in the Labor Division. The Red Scare mood then spread to the employment front in the fall of 1950, and many companies, particularly banks and department stores, began systematically using private investigation agencies to check applicants’ backgrounds and political attitudes. This kind of climate reminded some people of wartime Japan under the tight control of the Public Security Preservation Law of 1925, which provided a legal basis for imprisonment of communists and socialists, as well as liberals and Christians, and which later laid the groundwork for suppression of any kind of opposition that did not comply with Japan’s war effort.

³³ See, for instance, Takemae, *Shogen Nihon senryoshi* [Oral Testimonies of the Occupation of Japan] and Miyake Akimasa, *Reddo paji to wa nani ka* [What was the Red Purge?].

³⁴ Letter, Burati to Sullivan, August 22, 1950, File 12, Box 1, PVB, WSU, Detroit, MI.

³⁵ Sasaki Ryosuke, oral interview in Kawanishi, *Kikigaki* [Oral Recollections], 56.

Social Reactions to the Red Purge

It was such feelings of a “return” to wartime that precipitated the agitation of the student movement. While the wave of student movements had been growing since the early days of the postwar period, it was the years between 1950 and 1953, in particular, that marked their full zenith.³⁶ On September 29, 1950, for instance, 1,500 students gathered at Waseda University in opposition to the firing of “red” professors at Waseda, Hosei, and Tokyo Universities.³⁷ Anti-Red Purge movements spread quickly among students, and, a week later, in October 1950, about 3,000 students rallied at Tokyo University (Picture 1).³⁸ One bulletin, issued during this demonstration, expressed students’ concerns and ways of thinking very well; it read:

Today’s Red Purge, which began with the outbreak of the Korean War, is essentially different from those similar ones we have been fighting since last year. Today’s Red Purge not only prepares for a new war but also turns Japan into a battlefield. Already, many factories in Japan have begun producing weapons openly, and propaganda for war has been promoted day by day. Furthermore, now, the smell of gunpowder has blanketed the campus, and military research at the university is spreading around us. Under such a situation, what does the Red Purge today mean? Our wartime history tells us the meaning of it.³⁹

The wave of student movements became widely known to the general public when a violent riot erupted at Waseda on October 17, in which police made a wholesale mass arrest of 143 students—the first such event in the history of Japan.⁴⁰

Kobe Mitsuo, one of eighty-nine students eventually suspended from the school for an indefinite period, wrote: “I am not a member of the Japanese

³⁶ *Shiryo sengo gakusei undo [Source Book for Postwar Student Movements]*, Vol. 2 (1950-1951) and Vol. 3 (1952-1955), (Tokyo, 1969).

³⁷ *Waseda daigaku shinbun*, October 1, 1950. Newspaper Reading Room, NDL, Tokyo.

³⁸ *Todai Gakusei Shinbun*, October 5, 1950. Newspaper Reading Room, NDL, Tokyo; *Todai toso nyusu*, October 11, 1950 and October 24, 1950. The Student Movement File, OISS, Hosei University, Tokyo.

³⁹ A statement draft for the anti-red purge rally held in October 1950. The Student Movement File, OISS, Tokyo.

⁴⁰ “Sodai de kuzen no gakusei fushoji [Unprecedented Student Scandal at Waseda],” *Mainichi Shinbun*, October 18, 1950; *Asahi Shinbun*, October 18, 1950, Newspaper Reading Room, NDL, Tokyo.

Communist Party, nor am I a communist. Needless to say not a 'tool' of it. I am just an everyday sort of a student. I just feel extremely angry with a powerful force that suppresses freedom. I am sure all of us remember the ravages of war."⁴¹ From these statements above, we can see that the point of contention had gradually shifted from anti-Red Purge to anti-war. Such student and peace movements developed during the Korean War period, which culminated in the May Day demonstration of 1952 (Picture 2).⁴² The evolution of student movements during the Korean War is itself very interesting. However, what this section intends to focus on is not so much anti-Red Purge student movements, but social reactions to these movements.

In brief, the general reaction in society toward anti-Red Purge movements was cold. It is interesting to note that the primary concern for the general public was not so much the "Red Purge" but the seeming threat to order in society. For instance, major newspapers were critical of the students. Describing the student movements as an "unprecedented scandal," an editorial of the *Mainichi Shinbun*, for instance, warned, "College students should not behave like spoiled children." The newspaper went on to say that the "scandal" was directed under the "guidance of small and peculiar group of students," that student activism was nothing more than a "kind of sport among certain happy people," and that the youth and women were

⁴¹ *Waseda Daigaku Shinbun*, December 1, 1950. Newspaper Reading Room, NDL, Tokyo.

⁴² See, for instance, Masuda Hajimu, "Fear of World War III: Social Politics of Japan's Re-armament and Peace Movements during the Korean War, 1950-53," *Journal of Contemporary History* (forthcoming).

particularly vulnerable to communist propaganda.⁴³ The *Asahi Shinbun*, likewise, wrote that such extreme actions should be stopped to protect social order.⁴⁴

The point in contention involved preserving order in society. Even college newspapers, like *Waseda Daigaku Shinbun* [Waseda University Newspaper], which had supported student political activity, changed their tone, and stated, “Students must not be rioters at any time. The incident was by no means orderly behavior.”⁴⁵ From their perspective, the anti-Red Purge movement was bad not because of its point of view, in itself, but its disturbance of social order. For many, whatever the content of their arguments, the students need to be punished because they violated public order and security. In order to recover order—and to quiet the students—two measures were taken: first, to remove a number of the “leaders” of popular movements, and, second, to utilize the logic of the Cold War, which proved quite useful in restoring order at home.⁴⁶

In a sense, struggles over the “Red Purge” can be seen as a social contest between two versions of “reality” in postwar Japan—that is, contingency and historical continuity. One “reality” is that a large number of the Japanese people, especially the young and urbanites, enthusiastically embraced postwar reforms following the end of World War II. Many Japanese raised doubts about established orders and values, welcoming radical changes and reforms, producing waves of labor, student, and women’s movements (Picture 3).⁴⁷ Nonetheless, at the same time,

⁴³ “Sodai de kuzen no gakusei fushoji [Unprecedented Student Scandal at Waseda],” *Mainichi Shinbun*, October 18, 1950, Newspaper Reading Room, NDL, Tokyo

⁴⁴ *Asahi Shinbun*, October 18, 1950, Newspaper Reading Room, NDL, Tokyo.

⁴⁵ *Waseda Daigaku Shinbun*, October 21, 1950. Newspaper Reading Room, NDL, Tokyo.

⁴⁶ *Asahi Shinbun*, December 9, 1950; *Mainichi Shinbun*, December 19, 1950.

⁴⁷ John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W.W. Norton,

there were other groups of people, particularly elderly and rural residents, who detested postwar reforms, and who desired to restore “normal” social relations and order at home (Picture 4).

In general, scholarly work have heavily focused on progressive changes in the postwar period, such as those presented by labor, woman, student, and peace movements, while paying remarkably little attention to other people who did not welcome such changes. Yet, there were, in fact, quite a few kinds of those people. According to one opinion poll taken at the height of labor movements in 1948, for instance, more than a half of those who polled in Tokyo and Kyoto were angry about recurring labor strikes. According to this poll, women, in particular, opposed the strike involving buses and surface railways in Kyoto and Tokyo. Interestingly, many did not oppose the amounts demanded by labor unions; they opposed the *method* of their demand—striking.⁴⁸

“No Reform Anymore”: Grassroots Social Conservatism

Such oppositional attitudes toward the radical manner of changes in society clearly appeared in the 1952 national election—the first after the end of the U.S. occupation, which resulted in the return of the conservative party to national politics. Observing election result, literary scholar Togawa Yukio wrote:

The fact that the Liberal Party gets a majority after all demonstrates the popular will. It suggests the wish of the voiceless people, which seems to be: “No reform anymore.” People are finally able to live like decent human beings seven years since the defeat in the war. Of course, they have grievances and anxiety, but for now people want to

1999).

⁴⁸ “Attitudes of Tokyo and Kyoto Residents toward Strikes of Government Workers,” August 1948, Reports of the Public Opinion and Sociological Research Division (CIE), PSD-1, Reel 1, Page 71-81, Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room, NDL, Tokyo.

preserve the status quo. After drastic reforms, one after the other, people usually feel, for better or worse, “It’s all right as it is. Don’t change anything anymore.” I think now is the time for such a period.⁴⁹

Togawa’s observation was, perhaps, too moderate, because the victory of the conservative party did not mean the maintenance of the status quo of the postwar period. It was a clear choice to restore traditional, accustomed order in Japan, which was marred, from the conservatives’ perspective, only during the wartime and occupation period.⁵⁰ However, he had a sharp eye for grasping an atmosphere of society that had come to dislike drastic social changes.⁵¹

As a way to examine such a social atmosphere, one can read hundreds of letters and postcard in the National Diet Library in Tokyo, written by ordinary people and sent to various local and national level politicians in the fall of 1950 and 1951. Some of them quite vividly give a sense of the social and political atmosphere of the period. The first is from an anonymous resident in Kyoto, sent to a local politician in 1951. This letter is interesting because it expresses an aversion to recent social changes and shows a much deeper concern, about the lack of “*chusin* [center]” in postwar Japan:

I believe the course of action we have taken since the defeat of the war in every field, particularly politics and education, must lead the destruction of our nation. Such a way simply won’t work to fight communism at all. [...]. I don’t want to turn our mother country into a battlefield. I don’t want to turn our country into the Balkans in East Asia, nor another Korea. I want to save our country by our hands, and, no matter what, to protect it from a foreign invasion.⁵²

⁴⁹ Togawa Yukio, *Waseda Gakusei Shinbun*, October 7, 1952. Newspaper Reading Room, NDL, Tokyo.

⁵⁰ For the perspective of the conservatives, such as Yoshida Shigeru, see, for instance, John W. Dower, *Empire and Aftermath: Yoshida Shigeru and the Japanese Experience, 1878-1954* (Cambridge, MA, 1979).

⁵¹ See, also, Ronald Dore’s earlier field work, such as *Land reform in Japan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959) and *City life in Japan: A Study of a Tokyo Ward* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958).

⁵² Letter, Anonymous Kyoto resident to Ashida Hitoshi, PAH, Correspondence File, No. 284-3, NDL, Tokyo.

At the end of this long letter, the author got to the crux of his concerns:

We, the people of this nation, wish to have the center. The solidarity of the nation is of vital importance. Nobody in our country will accept lines of argument, such as 'for freedom,' 'for peace,' or 'for the improvement of the standard of living.' Most importantly, we don't want to throw away our long tradition. Nor do we want to give up our history. Only in this manner will we be able to achieve independence and to cooperate with the anti-communist front on the Western side.⁵³

In stressing the “threat” of communism, what the anonymous writer longed for seemed to be to reassemble a shattered social order—or, broadly, a national identity. For this author, however biased his interpretation, foreign events and the war in Korea provided a chance to strengthen and promote domestic concerns.

Indeed, society had changed a lot in the postwar period. The center seemed to be “lost” and traditional orders were “disturbed.” Students began rioting, women began disobeying, and workers expanding their efforts to fight back. For example, a group of housewives in a suburban community near Tokyo began signature campaigns on June 25, 1951, the one year anniversary of the Korean War, in opposition to any war and rearmament. Their community paper revealed that women were in fact a driving force, reporting that one old woman devoted herself to the campaign, that mothers earnestly joined it, and that young girls were eager to help it, and so forth. The paper also reported reactions of men; one housewife confessed that her husband refused to sign, and another reported that she was questioned about how signatures could prevent war.⁵⁴

The rise of new actors, such as students and women, and new methods, such as signature campaigns and mass demonstrations, in society and politics made a

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ *Akarui machi [Bright Community]*, July 25, 1951, Papers of Nakamura Mitsuo [hereafter PNM], No. 137, Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room, NDL, Tokyo.

large portion of the conservative population of Japan anxious, and even resentful. One of the most angry men might have been a 58-year-old doctor, named Hidaka Hiroshi, in the small city of Yonago, Shimane Prefecture. He was worried about the postwar emergence of women into social and political arenas, whose brains, he believed, were “ignorant and uncomprehending.” He wrote in April 1951:

I feel gloomy about the superficiality of Japan’s national character and its society today when I see such women, jumping on the bandwagon of the current of the times, getting positions in important posts such as mayor or congressman. Women who put forth practically impossible arguments against rearmament are virtually traitors to our country. It is no exaggeration to say so in view of today’s world situation.”⁵⁵

This letter is interesting because of his use of the “real world situation” to express his disgust about the rising status of women in postwar Japan. He continued:

From very early ages, a saying “There are women behind history” always means tragedy and collapse. Women’s participation in politics rarely produced positive results, and, regardless of East or West, there are many examples of a saying, “A woman showing her cleverness fails to sell the cow.” While we cannot take legal measures to ban women’s political involvement, we should seriously question the appointment of women to important and practical posts in politics. The anti-rearmament argument is, after all, a purely empty theory that ignores the real situation in the world. I seriously doubt the existence of their conscience.⁵⁶

In the end of his long letter, he recommended not conducting a referendum on the issue of amending the Constitution. The reason for this was that the majority of “ignorant” women might cause an unfavorable result. This letter is interesting because of its clear expression of a grassroots conservatism, which detested social changes in the postwar period. Moreover, it’s interesting to note his use of the East-West confrontation in an attempt to contain social conflicts, such as, the rise of women in society. Of course, this letter was not written as a representative voice of

⁵⁵ Letter, Hidaka Hiroshi to Ashida Hitoshi, PAH, Correspondence File, No.272, NDL, Tokyo.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

a particular group, but it conveys a feeling of the people who quietly supported the social purges of 1950, and silenced anti-Red Purge movements. In fact, practice of the “Red Purge” continued in communities beyond companies and organization. According to memoirs, many experienced difficulty in getting jobs and were ostracized in their hometowns, which resulted in, in extreme cases, suicide, divorce, and the dissolution of families for years.⁵⁷

This section has examined the practice of the mass terminations of 1950, opposition to such mass dismissals, and social backlash to this opposition. Through tracing the series of actions and reactions, it has examined three points, concerning the actors, nature, and function of the Red Purge. The questions raised here are: Who purged whom for what purpose? What was the Red Purge, after all?

The large majority of the existing literature has suggested that it was the GHQ and Washington that ordered the purge of communists and communist sympathizers in order to create an anti-communist country in East Asia. However, the findings of this study do not fit neatly into such a Washington-directed model. First and foremost, many dismissals in ordinary companies were actually carried out through ordinary employers’ own decisions, and factional disputes in labor unions facilitated the mass dismissal of certain groups of people. Second, most of

⁵⁷ Takekura Kin'ichiro, *Kirarera batten: Shiryō reddo paji* [Got Fired: Documents on the Red Purge] (Fukuoka, 1980). Also, see various memoirs and local history books, such as Tokyo Hachi-ni-roku kai ed., *1950-nen 8-gatsu 26-nichi: Densan reddo paji 30-shunen kinen bunshu* [August 26, 1950: The Thirty-Year Anniversary Collection of the Densan Red Purge] (Tokyo, 1983); Asahi Shinbunsha Reddo Paji Shogenroku Kanko linkai ed., *1950-nen 7-gatsu 28-nichi: Asahi Shinbunsha no reddo paji shogenroku* [July 28, 1950: The Collection of Testimonies on the Asahi Newspaper Red Purge] (Tokyo, 1981); Amagasaki reddo paji mondai kondankai ed., *Kaiso Amagasaki no reddo paji* [Recollections: Red Purge in Amagasaki] (Osaka, 2002); and Fukushima-ken minshushi kenkyukai ed., *Hatsudensho no reddo paji: Densan Inawashiro bunkai* [The Red Purge in Power Plant: Densan's Inawashiro Branch] (Tokyo, 2001).

those expelled were not necessarily communists or fifth columnists. Third, in some cases, the Labor Division of the GHQ even tried to stop “abuse of the Red Purge,” and many were, nevertheless, fired due to disturbing the “order” and “harmony” of their workplaces. Finally, opposition to the Red Purge was muted among the majority in society, who chose to say: “no reform anymore.” Therefore, it is reasonable to say that the actual agency of the Red Purge was not so much the GHQ and Washington as tens of thousands of local people in Japan. Viewing it this way, this study intends to complicate the conventional Washington-centered approach, and suggests a broader social understanding of the phenomenon, rooted in historical and local struggles in Japan.

Then, once we re-examine the issue of agency, we must face the problem of the characterization of events. That is to say, was it really a “Red” Purge? Aren’t we missing something important by labeling and perceiving events simply as the Red Purge? Of course, there were some aspects of the events that fit nicely with the Red Purge model. However, this section argues that there were other aspects that would be better conceived broadly as “social suppression” or “social punishment,” conducted by nameless and numberless local people in attempts to contain social changes and restore and maintain order. Viewing the waves of mass dismissals in 1950, not as the “Red Purge” but as social suppression, this section avoids describing it as a peculiar phenomenon that occurred under the abnormal climate of the Cold War, and intends to approach it as a common, everyday occurrence that could develop at any time and place under similar social and historical conditions. Indeed, something quite similar occurred in Europe: Anti-striking trend in Britain.

Britain: "Name the Traitors! Expose Enemies within Our Gates"

On Thursday, September 14, 1950, nearly a half of all London buses were off the roads. In a mess of the traffic in the city, the most congested spot was at Victoria Station where thousands of people arriving from suburbs and country found that many bus routes had been canceled. It was an unofficial strike, carried out by a portion of the members of the Transport Workers' Union, against the recruitment of woman bus conductors, which would, they argued, weaken busmen's bargaining strength in demanding higher pay. The next day, the strike spread from 13 to 20 bus garages in the city with more than 11,000 drivers and conductors out, and nearly 2,000 busses off the roads. In addition, some tram drivers and port workers joined in the strike.⁵⁸ It was not rare to see such an outbreak and spread of unofficial strikes in postwar British society because during this period workers' claims were often blocked by the union, rather than employers (Picture 5).⁵⁹

What was less usual was the degree of social criticism. "Anyone who goes on strike now will do so knowing that he is helping traitors," declared the *Daily Graphic*, "He will range himself with the enemies of Britain—with the fifth column within this country that takes its orders from foreigners who seek to destroy us."⁶⁰ The bus strike happened to coincide with the release of the first British casualty list in Korea,

⁵⁸ "1,200 London Buses off Roads Today," September 14, 1950, *Daily Mail*; "Rush-hour chaos," September 15, 1950, *Evening Standard*; "11,000 Busmen Out in London," September 15, 1950, *Daily Mail*; "Stalin's Stooges," September 17, 1950, *Sunday Graphic*; "Last bus strikers vote to go back," September 18, 1950, *Daily Herald*; "All bus service running today," September 18, 1950, *Time*, British Library Newspaper Reading Room, Colindale, UK.

⁵⁹ "Busmen Drew Up Terms: 15,700 on Strike," September 16, 1950, *Manchester Guardian* in HO45/25546, National Archives, Kew, UK.

⁶⁰ "Now Name the Traitor," September 16, 1950, *Daily Graphic*, HO45/25546, Kew, UK.

and this provided the basic background for the intensification of the tone of criticism of strikes at home.⁶¹ The Minister of Labour, George A. Isaacs, for example, said at the House of Commons on September 15:

I am speaking at a time when our men are facing serious risks in Korea, and when it is essential that there should be no danger of interference with their supplies and support. [...]. The plot is for workers on the docks, road transport, meat-carrying and the markets to strike in key places. The ultimate purpose is to slow the rearmament drive and hold up reinforcement and supplies to the fighting front in Korea. None of the strikes may be big, but the total effect is intensified to cripple industrial activity and spread discontent.⁶²

Middle- and low-brow popular newspapers fell into step, calling strikers “traitors,” “plotters,” and “wreckers.” Britain’s best-selling newspaper, *Daily Express*, warned in its editorial: “No one knows when the enemy will strike next; maybe it will be in bloodless fashion in the ports of Britain.”⁶³ The aforementioned *Daily Graphic* ran an article, complaining that the Minister did not provide names of leading strikers, insisting, “Name the traitors! Name the plotters who seek to use British workers as tools in their dark design. Expose these enemies within our gates.”⁶⁴

Another popular conservative newspaper, the *Daily Mail*, likewise published a lengthy comment on September 16, harshly condemning the bus strikes:

What are the intentions of these traitors? [...]. The London bus strike may prove to be only the start of their wretched scheme. If they have their way the whole country may be crippled, for Red agents are known to be fomenting discord throughout all the key industries and services. What is more, they are still allowed to go about their evil business unchecked. No doubt the men who strike or are on the verge of doing so have some legitimate grievances. But the Communists who seize on such complaints have no thought for the workers. [...]. Their [Workers’] grievances are at the moment of little real importance compared with the danger which the whole country faces, and there is not one just industrial wrong which cannot now be settled amicably by negotiation. We must neutralise our Fifth Column. But how? [...].

⁶¹ “Opinion,” September 16, 1950, *Daily Express*, HO45/25546, Kew, UK.

⁶² For Isaacs’ speech, see, for instance, *Daily Mail*, *Daily Herald*, *Daily Express*, on September 16, 1950, HO45/25546, Kew, UK.

⁶³ Editorial, September 16, 1950, *Daily Express*, HO45/25546, Kew, UK.

⁶⁴ “Now Name the Traitor,” September 16, 1950, *Daily Graphic*, HO45/25546, Kew, UK.

Certainly it is not enough to arrest them on some minor charge and jail them for a couple of months or so. These men are traitors to the nation and must be held until all danger is past, how ever long that may be. If present laws are inadequate new ones must be framed, and speedily. This is not a matter of punishment but of protection.⁶⁵

As suggested in this editorial, legal measures against strikers and members of the Communist Party became a hot issue of discussion in Britain in the fall of 1950.⁶⁶ In fact, in the case of gas workers' strike that occurred in late September, which involved approximately 1,500 gasmen in London, ten leading figures of the strike were arrested and imprisoned for a month.⁶⁷

Faced with the explosion of criticism toward strikes in the fall of 1950, participants were bewildered. "Who, me, an agitator? Don't talk silly," a 39-year-old member of the Merseyside Port Workers' Committee, said, "I am a member of the town's Liberal Party executive." Another 24-year-old man, likewise, asked a reporter, "Do I look like a saboteur? I am happily married. I am a supporter of the Labour Party." A 32-year-old man added, "We were all democratically elected by the dockers for this job."⁶⁸ These members argued that such an allegation that they all were communists would not solve any wage and condition problems on the docks. Nonetheless, strikes were rapidly losing support from within. A 35-year-old strike leader, Henry Prutton, said:

⁶⁵ "Moscow's Mission," September 16, 1950, *Daily Mail*, H045/25546, Kew, UK.

⁶⁶ "Deakin Calls For Ban On Reds," September 17, 1950, *Star*, H045/25546, Kew, UK; "Red Agitators maybe Outlawed," September 17, 1950, *Daily Mail*, British Library Newspaper Reading Room, Colindale, UK.

⁶⁷ "Troops for Gasworkers?" September 26, 1950, *Daily Express*; "Gas Strikers Wavering," September 29, 1950, *Daily Mail*; "Gas: Navy is Going," October 3, 1950, *Daily Express*; "The Navy's Here," October 4, 1950, *Daily Express*; "Gasman Going Back," October 6, 1950, *Daily Mail*, and "'Repeal Order 1305' Call," October 9, 1950, *Daily Mail*, British Library Newspaper Reading Room, Colindale, UK. For the Order 1305, a legal basis for the imprisonment of 10 workers, see, "Order 1305: The Position Today," *Labour Research*, in Working-Class Movement Library, Manchester, UK.

⁶⁸ "Dockers say, 'We're not agitators,'" September 16, 1950, *Daily Mail*, H045/25546, Kew, UK.

Now I appeal to ... members to draw back before it is too late. I have had my share of strikes. But on this issue I appeal to all trade unionists here to accept the guidance of their officials. A strike now would be a blow at our boys fighting in Korea.⁶⁹

As in other places we have seen, at the time of the Korean War, discussions of social conflicts were replaced with the issues of alleged global conflict and national security. One union leader analyzed that workers had gone back to work because they realized their faces were being trodden on to serve communist interests.⁷⁰ In fact, in the case of London bus strike, a “mass meeting” originally planned was aborted because no speaker arrived and very few attended.⁷¹ The strikes, in a sense, collapsed from within.

It is important to note that strikers were blamed not because of the particular contents of their claims, such as demands for higher pay, but the manner in which demands were made—striking. As appeared in a cartoon in the *Daily Mail* (Picture 6), “workers” were often depicted as uncontrollable and disobedient elements—an enemy of “orderly” society, rather than an enemy in the Cold War.⁷² In a sense, a hidden motivation of anti-strike sentiments was based not so much on ideological or political ideas as a desire for a return to an “orderly” and “normal” society following the turbulent years of the wartime and postwar periods.

Indeed, such anti-strike sentiments intensified during the Korean War in parallel with the development of resentment toward the Labour Party that had been in power since 1945. With the country at war, and with mounting criticism toward

⁶⁹ “Why did strike collapse,” Sept 18, 1950, *Daily Express*, H045/25546, Kew, UK.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ “All bus service running today,” Sept 18, 1950, *Time*, H045/25546, Kew, UK; “Reds Call Off their Strike Plan,” September 18, 1950, *Daily Mail*, British Library Newspaper Reading Room, Colindale, UK.

⁷² “Desire Caught By Tail,” October 11, 1950, *Daily Mail*, British Library Newspaper Reading Room, Colindale, UK.

strikers and leftists in general, in fact, the winter of 1950-1951 marked the moment of a dramatic swing of popular attitudes away from Labour, and mostly favor of the Conservatives.⁷³ The Gallup Poll, for instance, raised the Conservatives five points and reduced Labour by the same number, increasing the Conservative lead to thirteen points. In late February, the lead extended to fourteen—the biggest lead Gallup had given either party since it marked Labour at eighteen points ahead in January 1945.⁷⁴

At a glance, the development of the Korean War ignited a flare-up of anti-communist sentiments that had been already in the air, which, in turn, contributed to the end of the Labour government. In fact, the rise of anti-communism was conspicuous. A bi-monthly magazine, *Popular Pictorial*, for instance, devoted an entire issue in February 1951 exclusively to the Communist menace, meeting with an exceedingly good reception, with early sales reaching 100,000 copies above normal circulation.⁷⁵ Similarly, low- and middlebrow popular newspapers kept attacking the Labour government, labeling it as “socialist” and “communist.”⁷⁶ At a glance, the political power of the left was tamed under the Cold War climate with mounting criticism from conservatives.

Underneath such loaded Cold War terms, here, again, existed the desire for a return to “normalcy.” To begin with, as historian Robert Taylor points out, many working- and middle-class people sought to better their lives only within a

⁷³ “Public Opinion Summary, February 1951,” No. 25, Conservative Central Office, Papers of the Conservative Party, Duke Humfrey's Library, Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Oxford, UK. OX1.

⁷⁴ Ibid; David Childs, *Britain Since 1945* 5th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2000), 25.

⁷⁵ “Public Opinion Summary, February 1951,” No. 25, Conservative Central Office, Papers of the Conservative Party, Oxford University, Oxford, UK. OX1.

⁷⁶ Arthur Marwick, *British Society Since 1945* 2nd ed. (New York: Penguin, 1990), 99.

surprisingly narrow framework, instead of radically changing their world.⁷⁷ Many workers were fed up with restrictions on small pleasures they had enjoyed before the war, and middle-class people were increasingly resentful of Labour-imposed austerity in the postwar years.⁷⁸ It is important to note that such a fading of support occurred not necessarily because of a change of political opinions among supporters, but due to disappointments concerning daily-life experiences in the postwar period, such as increasing costs of living, as well as food and housing shortages—the top three issues for the national election in 1951, in which the Conservatives came to power for the first time since 1945.⁷⁹

These issues were not merely the material and economic problems they appeared at a glance. They were, in effect, the topics on the frontlines of social wars. In a dispute about what should be considered “normal” life, Labour and strikers were considered to be blocking the return to “ordinary” life, or incapable of creating a route toward the restoration of such a life. The housing-shortage issue, for instance, forced many families to change their ways of living: a family living in a single room, a couple living in their parents’ house, families sharing a house, and so on.⁸⁰ The cost of living issue—always the number one issue for the 1951 election campaigns for both parties—might be more telling, since it can be seen to contain social conflicts concerning the images of women in society.

⁷⁷ Robert Taylor, “The Rise and Disintegration of the Working Class,” in Paul Addison and Harriet Jones ed., *A Companion to Contemporary Britain, 1939-2000* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), 376.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 375; Alfred H. Havighurst, *Britain in Transition* 4th ed (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 446.

⁷⁹ See Conservative Party’s “Public Opinion Summary,” in particular, issues published in late 1950 and 1951, Conservative Central Office, Papers of the Conservative Party, Oxford University, Oxford, UK.

⁸⁰ “Public Opinion Summary, June 1951,” No. 29, Conservative Central Office, Papers of the Conservative Party, Oxford University, Oxford, UK. OX7.

As in Japan and the United States, World War II changed the roles of women in British society. During wartime many women worked outside their homes, and many continued to work in the postwar period, as well. According to a study by the Research Department of the Conservative Party, in the spring of 1951, there were, in fact, more women at work than during the peak period of the war; the total number was assessed at 7,276,000 in April of 1951, as opposed to 7,265,000 in September of 1943, meaning that one-third of the working population was women. The primary cause of this was commonly explained as economic need.⁸¹ An article in the conservative *Daily Mail* argued that it was “loneliness” that sent women to work.⁸² Whatever the causes, in this period, many men had to let their wives go out to work for the first time since the war, or even for the first time ever. A man reportedly deplored the situation in anger, turning his back on Labour: “I was Labour until my wife went away for three weeks, and I had to do the shopping. That was enough!”⁸³

When male workers like this man complained about the “cost of living,” many actually lamented social changes, such as those involving the notions of gender, accompanied by the increasing cost of living. The crux of the resentment, thus, was disappointment about the fact that “normal” life had not been restored even five years after the end of the war. Further research is needed, but quite a few British women in this period, too, seemed to desire the return to such a “normal” life.

According to the research by the Conservative Party, many female workers

⁸¹ “Public Opinion Summary, April 1951,” No. 27, Conservative Central Office, Papers of the Conservative Party, Oxford University, Oxford, UK. OX6.

⁸² “It’s Loneliness that Sends Most Women to Work,” September 30, 1950, *Daily Mail*, British Library Newspaper Reading Room, Colindale, UK.

⁸³ “Public Opinion Summary, February 1951,” No. 25, Conservative Central Office, Papers of the Conservative Party, Oxford University, Oxford, UK. OX3.

remained reluctant about, or even opposed to, taking part in labor movements, and, in fact, working- and middle-class women were considered pivotal elements in the victory of the Conservative Party in 1951.⁸⁴

Viewed in this way, the essence of the swing to the Conservatives circa 1950-1951 was not necessarily due to mounting Cold War pressures but had more to do with domestic desires of restoring the “normal” social order and ordinary life of peacetime, which was, from this viewpoint, interrupted only in the wartime and postwar periods. It makes sense, thus, that strikes in this period were crushed due to the disturbance of order, rather than strikers’ claims, in themselves. Such a longing for a return to the “normalcy” can be found symbolically in an editorial in the *Daily Mail* on New Year’s Day of 1951, entitled “Don’t be afraid to have fun.” It urged Britons: “Let us get back some of the silliness of life, returning to the giggle, and to an abandonment to the fun of the moment.”⁸⁵

Viewing the anti-strikes and anti-labor trend not merely as anticommunism but more broadly as a series of social suppressions, and not as a unique phenomenon, this section avoids describing the event as a *peculiar* phenomenon in Britain. Instead, this section has discussed such a phenomenon as a common, everyday occurrence that could develop in any place under similar social and historical conditions. In fact, if we see it as reflecting social suppression against “disorder,” we can see the development of a similar pattern in many parts of the world during the Korean War. Following the cases of China, Taiwan, Philippines,

⁸⁴ “Public Opinion Summary, April 1951,” No. 27, Conservative Central Office, Papers of the Conservative Party, Oxford University, Oxford, UK. OX6.

⁸⁵ “Don’t be afraid to have fun,” January 1, 1951, *Daily Mail*, British Library Newspaper Reading Room, Colindale, UK.

Japan, and Britain, our final example is on the other side of the Atlantic: so-called “McCarthyism” in the United States.

The United States: Reconsidering McCarthyism

This section explores the politics of social suppression in the United States during the Korean War period, usually referred to as McCarthyism. Since the late 1950s, various writers and scholars have provided explanations and interpretations of this phenomenon, making up an enormous quantity of literature.⁸⁶ By the late 1990s, it had become a cliché among scholars to point out that the term “McCarthyism” is misleading. The term highlights Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy, discounting the important roles of other national and local politicians in both the Republican and Democratic parties.⁸⁷ It neglects the enormous power wielded by federal government offices, such as the FBI.⁸⁸ It dismisses popular, grassroots dimensions of the phenomenon.⁸⁹ It describes the event as an aberration, ignoring the long history of red scare politics in the United States, which actually has been an inextricable part of political processes since the late nineteenth century.⁹⁰ It

⁸⁶ For more detailed discussion on historiography of McCarthyism, see, for instance, Ellen Schrecker, “McCarthyism and the Red Scare,” in Jean-Christophe Agnew and Roy Rosenzweig, *A Companion to Post-1945 America* (Malden, MA, 2006), 371-84.

⁸⁷ Richard Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism: Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics, and Internal Security, 1946-1948* (New York, 1971); Frank Kofsky, *Harry S. Truman and the War Scare of 1948: A Successful Campaign to Deceive the Nation* (New York, 1993).

⁸⁸ Ellen Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Boston, 1998). Schrecker investigates FBI files and archival documents, and stresses a “concerted campaign by a loosely structured, but surprisingly self-conscious, network of political activists who had been working for years to drive Communism out of American life.”

⁸⁹ Richard Fried, *The Russians Are Coming! The Russians Are Coming!: Pageantry and Patriotism in Cold-War America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). Fried describes the roots of the Red Scare in the postwar period as a metamorphosed product of popular, grassroots patriotism.

⁹⁰ Michael J. Heale, *McCarthy's Americans: Red Scare Politics in State and Nation, 1935-1965* (Athens, GA, 1998). Heale argues that McCarthyism was neither the contingent product of popular hysteria,

slights the decisive impact of the Korean War, which played more important roles than McCarthy himself in igniting the climate of anti-communism in that period.⁹¹ In sum, the literature shows that the vast majority of scholars agree with historian M. J. Heale, who points out that the Senator from Wisconsin “had done very little or nothing to create the phenomenon he had come to personify.”⁹²

Yet, most studies share two assumptions. First, we usually conceive of McCarthyism as anti-communist red hunting. The battle line here was, we assume, over ideology. However, in labeling and perceiving the phenomenon as McCarthyism, we tend to miss other diverse incidents of social suppression conducted during this period, which silenced various social conflicts under the banner of anti-communism. Such local struggles involved, for instance, racial, labor, and gender tensions. As this section examines below, many targets in this period were not communists or communist sympathizers, but, for instance, African Americans, women, labor activists, and gays and lesbians, as well as advocates of New Deal programs such as public housing and universal health care. What these groups represented was not communist ideology but elements of newly emerging social conflicts, which had developed through experiences of World War II.

nor the production of gifted demagogues, but part of the long-standing historical political process in American culture.

⁹¹ Philip Jenkins, *Cold War At Home: The Red Scare in Pennsylvania, 1945-1960* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1999). Jenkins maintains that McCarthyism should be termed the “Korean War Red Scare” because the outbreak of the Korean War fundamentally changed the whole political environment.

⁹² M. J. Heale, *McCarthy’s Americans*, xi. Of course, it does not mean that McCarthy did not play roles. See, for instance, Robert Griffith, *The Politics of Fear: Joseph R. McCarthy and the Senate*, 2nd ed. (Amherst, MA, 1987 [1970]) and David Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense: The World of Joe McCarthy* (New York, 2005 [1983]). Both Griffith and Oshinsky highlight the individual roles of Joseph McCarthy as a creator of the phenomenon.

Reexamining McCarthyism in this way, this section intends to reconsider its nature and function.

Second, this section questions another common assumption in the existing literature: McCarthyism as an American phenomenon. Whether describing it as derived from one gifted demagogue or from other politicians and officials, or as an expression of grassroots patriotism or the long tradition of red scare politics in American politics, many studies confine themselves to the field of American history. Of course, such a practice, in itself, is not wrong. Yet, seeing McCarthyism more broadly as the politics of social suppression, and viewing it from a global and comparative perspective, it becomes clear that the phenomenon was not unique to the United States. In fact, as we have seen thus far, the Korean War period was a moment of social suppression in many parts of the world.

Keeping a global and comparative perspective in mind, therefore, this section pays attention to actors and methods of social suppression through tracing the evolution of anti-communist movements. The questions raised here are: Who purged who and to what purpose? How was this suppression conducted? In addition, through examination of the actors and methods of suppression, this section attempts to delve more deeply into existing local struggles underneath ostensible battles of “anti-communism.” The ultimate goal, thus, is not simply to revisit and elucidate a new interpretation of McCarthyism, but to reconsider the nature and function of the Cold War. Let us begin with examining politics of social suppression in the summer and fall of 1950, particularly looking at who purged who and how it spread and functioned.

Politics of Anticommunism

In the United States, the outbreak of the Korean War marked a decisive moment for the proliferation and intensification of red scare politics in the latter half of 1950. While Joseph McCarthy gave his famous Wheeling speech in early February, he was more criticized than believed during the spring. Even Republican-leaning magazines *Life* and *Time* ignored the Wisconsin Senator until late April, when they began denouncing his groundless attacks.⁹³ As historian Robert P. Newman describes, it was the Korean War that “rescued” McCarthy.⁹⁴ When Chinese Communist forces intervened in Korea in the fall of 1950, fear and suspicion multiplied. One leftist observed the mood at that time: “The war fever is running so high in this country and the left is so intimidated that trying to talk for peace with reason and calmness is almost as useless as shouting in the teeth of a hurricane.”⁹⁵ In such a climate, the war in Korea was believed to be part of a global confrontation, and various kinds of leftists, perceived to be fifth-columnists, were closely watched on a daily basis.

Such an environment of surveillance did not, of course, simply emerged automatically; it was encouraged. It was President Harry S. Truman who urged government officials and ordinary people to report any suspicious activities: “I suggest that all patriotic organizations and individuals likewise report all such

⁹³ See articles and editorials in *Life* and *Time* between February and April in 1950.

⁹⁴ Robert P. Newman, “The Lingering Poison of McCarranism,” Address at the Carolinas Speech Communication Association meeting, Clemson, September 28, 1984, in Scrap Clipping File, Papers of Pat McCarran (hereafter PPM), Nevada Historical Society (hereafter NHS), Reno, NV.

⁹⁵ Letter, Mrs. Martin Thompson to Henry A. Wallace, August 9, 1950, Papers of Henry A. Wallace (hereafter PHAW), Box 37, Series III: Correspondence, University of Iowa (hereafter UI), Iowa City, IA.

information relating to espionage, sabotage, and subversive activities to the Federal Bureau of Investigation in this same manner.”⁹⁶ With such advocacy, it is not surprising that numerous reports were delivered to local and national government offices, as well as local newspapers. Some, if not the majority, were trivial and paranoid. In Glendale, a northeastern suburb of Los Angeles, for instance, irate parents reported the spread of “red propaganda” discovered in children’s card collections (Picture 7). A 10-cent pack of children’s trading cards, according to a report, included a card depicting a Russian soldier standing with smiling children in front of the Kremlin, with the red hammer-and-sickle communist banner over their heads. The superintendent of the elementary school quickly banned bringing card collections to school. A similar incident occurred in San Francisco, when a series of murals in the lobby of the Rincon Annex, the main downtown post office, touched off a heated debate about whether they included “communist propaganda,” and if they were art or propaganda. Examples of this kind might appear strange, or even funny, from today’s viewpoint, but, at that time such was not the case. They were delivered and taken seriously, and it is also important to note that these reports were *voluntarily* sent to officials and editors.

It is no wonder that, in September 1950, Congress overturned President Truman’s veto of the Internal Security Act of 1950—often called the McCarran Act—which required the registration of “communist” organizations in the United States, blocked members of these organizations from citizenship, and established an investigative board to examine persons suspected of engaging in subversive

⁹⁶ “Statement by the President,” July 24, 1950, Papers of Harry S. Truman (hereafter PHST), Student File 52, File 2-8, Harry S. Truman Library (hereafter HSTL), Independence, MO.

activities.⁹⁷ Behind congressional support for the act was the large portion of population that detested “communists,” whatever that meant. One Ohioan wrote an angry letter to the White House:

Mr. President:

Are you a Communist? Or are you a Communist sympathizer? If neither, why do you object to the McCarran Communist control bill [...]? We should have a law to hang every spy in peace time as well as war time. We should have laws made especially to deal with them. They are given too much protection here under our ordinary laws, and they should not have that protection. And there should be a law saying that any kind of criticism from them would be reason to banish them from this country. They don’t have to live here and are not wanted if they don’t like the kind of treatment they get here.⁹⁸

Another Wisconsin woman wrote, in a similar tone:

As a devoted and hundred percent American citizen, I feel that I cannot stand by and do nothing while our country is being overrun by Communists. I feel I must write you my viewpoints. [...]. I say every Communist should be rounded up and sent to Russia on the next boat, only then, can you expect to rid this country of aggression and any further aggression of evils ruling [*sic*] in this country!⁹⁹

In such a climate of anti-communist sentiments, those who might be perceived as “communistic” subdued their voices. Many liberals and progressives began to fear being called “liberal.”¹⁰⁰ Quite a few professors in the University of California system, who had been fighting for years over the loyalty oath controversy at the University, quickly compromised with the administrator’s requirement to take the loyalty oath as the war in Korea escalated.¹⁰¹ Henry A. Wallace, a former president of the Progressive Party, who resigned his position due to his support for American

⁹⁷ About McCarran Act.

⁹⁸ Letter, M. Keatle to Harry S. Truman, September 11, 1950, PHST, Box 1717, Official File (hereafter OF) 2750B, HSTL, Independence, MO.

⁹⁹ Letter, Mary Ann Matugeg, August 25, 1950, PHST, Box 881, OF 263, HSTL, Independence, MO.

¹⁰⁰ “People Fear being called ‘Liberal,’” March 9, 1951, *Palo Alto Times*, in the McCarthy Era Newspaper Clippings, 1946-1954 (hereafter MENC), Box 1, Special Collections and University Archives, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, CA.

¹⁰¹ “UC Professor Who Balked at Oath Are Now Relenting,” July 15, 1950, *Palo Alto Times*, MENC, Box 1, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, CA. .

military action in Korea, likewise, excused the McCarran Act, saying that the law reflected the sentiments of the people in a time of crisis, simply commenting, “The greater the menace, the greater the sacrifice.”¹⁰²

Still, the experiences of such public figures and big names might have been easier, since many of them at least had outlets for their opinions. Many common people who were similarly silenced at that time, on the other hand, had far fewer such opportunities. The experience of Helen MacMartin, a member of the Progressive Party of Vermont in the small town of Burlington (pop. 33,155 in 1950), exemplifies a typical five-step suppression on the ground.

The first step was the change in human relations in her community. Just few days after MacMartin’s disapproval of American military actions in Korea was published in a local newspaper in July 1950, she received a letter from a friend:

I cannot believe that you have personally sold out to the Communist Cause—though everything you have said in the article [in the local newspaper] would indicate so. I am writing because I do believe that you will listen to what I have to say, and because I hope there is still some hope for saving a person for the good of peace and democracy in which I think you believe, and because I hate to see a person persecuted.¹⁰³

MacMartin quickly replied:

No, I am not a Communist, have not “sold out” as you put it. If my convictions lead me more and more to know that Fascism and monopoly capitalism and imperialism of the U.S. is the great threat of our day and of many years back, it does not mean that I embrace Communism. Unfortunately for me and for many like me, just because the Communists believe this also, we are called Communists. I am afraid this sort of pressure has had its effect on Henry Wallace. [...]. Tom, I wish I could talk with you. But I don’t suppose you would be seen having lunch with me again.¹⁰⁴

No further reply came from the friend.

¹⁰² *Des Moines Tribune*, September 24 and 25, 1950, PHAW, UI, Iowa City, IA.

¹⁰³ Letter, Tom Braine to Helen MacMartin, July 18, 1950, Papers of the Progressive Party (hereafter PPP), Box 3, File 12, Special Collection, UI, Iowa City, IA.

¹⁰⁴ Letter, Helen MacMartin to Tom Braine, July 20, 1950, PPP, Box 3, File 12, UI, Iowa City, IA.

The second was a public attack in a local newspaper. The *Burlington Daily News* devoted an entire editorial to censuring MacMartin; it read,

Her ranting against 'American imperialism' when American soldiers are dying on Korean battlefields is disgusting. [...]. The wild bleating of Mrs. MacMartin marks her as a woman gone too far in her political thinking, as one who has been carried away by ideological confusions. [...]. The political aims and aspirations of Mrs. MacMartin are detestable in this time of grave crisis.¹⁰⁵

As in this case, local newspapers often took initiatives in decrying "communist" sentiments. In other places, such as in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, for instance, local newspapers conducted an "American-version" of a petition drive to counter "communist" signature-collecting campaigns.¹⁰⁶ In addition to newspapers, local branches of various social organizations—in particular churches and the American Legion—often took initiatives in attacking "reds" within communities.¹⁰⁷ In a rural area of Wisconsin, local American Legion officers, for instance, warned residents not to sign "Red fifth-column's efforts to destroy morale in this nation."¹⁰⁸

Back to the story of Helen MacMartin, the third step was a general boycott in the community. MacMartin tried to fight back, sending letters to local papers, hoping they would be published. She also continued to write to her friends, asking them to stand up for her. These letters, however, were ignored.¹⁰⁹ The fourth step was estrangement from family members; she was harshly condemned by her sister as a "dupe" and "fool" who wanted to "wear a martyr's crown." After a fierce

¹⁰⁵ Letter, Helen MacMartin to Jessie, August 6, 1950, PPP, Box 2, File 12, UI, Iowa City, IA.

¹⁰⁶ Letter, *Winston-Salem Journal* to Harry S. Truman, September 27, 1950, PHST, Box 1327, OF471B, HSTL, Independence, MO.

¹⁰⁷ Letter, Chas Beaulieu to Michael Essin, October 29, 1950, PPP, Box 5, File 22, UI, Iowa City, IA.

¹⁰⁸ "Legion Lashes Red-Inspired 'Peace' Effort," July 27, 1950, *Cumberland Advocate*, Wisconsin, PPP, Box 5, File 22, UI, Iowa City, IA.

¹⁰⁹ Letter, Helen MacMartin to "Dear Friends," July 19, 1950, PPP, Box 2, File 8, UI, Iowa City, IA; Letter, Chas Beaulieu to Michael Essin, September 13, 1950, PPP, Box 5, File 22, UI, Iowa City, IA; Letter, Carl Ramsey to Helen MacMartin, September 20, 1950, PPP, Box 3, File 12, UI, Iowa City, IA.

conversation, MacMartin realized that it was almost impossible to talk with her.¹¹⁰

Finally, in the last step, she lost her job caring for an elderly man in her neighborhood.¹¹¹

In examining MacMartin's case, it is important to note that the persecution was not official. Actual oppression took place in society, and "persecutors" were not necessarily politicians, lawyers, or FBI officials, but neighbors, friends, family members, and employers. With regard to method, there was no formal prosecution, no hearing, no trial. She was punished through rumors, a boycott, and an unofficial "trial" of publicity. This kind of case was, in fact, rather common. Many of those summoned to official hearings, such as the HUAC hearing, at that time were not *officially* convicted. A large majority were, in fact, not sentenced at all; many, however, found that their private employers immediately fired them, resulting in mass dismissals.¹¹²

Such mass terminations were not irrelevant to regulatory changes announced by President Truman in April 1951, regarding the applicability of the Loyalty Program. With his announcement, a dismissal that previously had to "show reasonable grounds" needed only "reasonable doubts."¹¹³ Not surprisingly, this change had the effect of broadening grounds for dismissals and suppression, first in governmental sectors, and then in other sectors at a similar manner. One 34-year-old African American in New York, for instance, lost his job in

¹¹⁰ Letter, Helen MacMartin to Max and Grace Granich, August 11, 1950, PPP, Box 3, File 12, UI, Iowa City, IA.

¹¹¹ Letter, Helen MacMartin to Carl Ramsey, February 7, 1951, PPP, Box 3, File 13, UI, Iowa City, IA.

¹¹² "The Reminiscences of Joseph Gordon (Occupation of Japan)" in the Oral History Collection of Columbia University, New York City, NY.

¹¹³ "Loyalty Board Fires Service," December 14, 1951, *Rockford Morning Star*, in Papers of John Service (PJS), Oversized Box 1, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, CA.

the post office through the Loyalty Program due to a record of joining a “communist-led” group that criticized discrimination and prejudice when he was 18 years old. He found another job as a truck driver, with a lower salary than his previous job, but soon was fired again when his employer found this past record. As these examples show, persecution escalated through a combination of political initiatives and social implementation, both of which contributed to the promotion of a climate of doubt and mutual surveillance.

Another hidden but powerful “executor” of social suppression was self-censorship. Fearing being assaulted publicly, many changed their stances and behaviors on their own. Many who had previously signed petitions for the Progressive Party, for instance, began asking local branches to remove their names from those petitions. Some asked to withdraw from membership. Other asked to stop receiving any publications which might attract attention from their neighbors.¹¹⁴ One Wisconsinite wrote to the secretariat of the party: “Please do not send me any more letters or papers of the Progressive Party. I am not interested. So please discontinue any mail dealing with the Party.”¹¹⁵ Another, similarly, wrote: “You will save yourself time and mailing costs if you remove our names from your mailing list. You will also save us the trouble of receiving and opening your political literature.”¹¹⁶ Some wrote in a more apologetic mood that their decisions to withdraw were made to defend themselves. One Denver woman, for instance,

¹¹⁴ Letter, Fred Behne to the Headquarter Office, July 30, 1950, PPP, Box 5, File 22, UI, Iowa City, IA. Such letters are numerous in Progressive Party’s correspondences in the summer and fall of 1950.

¹¹⁵ Letter, Joe Riblake to the Headquarter Office, September 14, 1950, PPP, Box 5, File 22, UI, Iowa City, IA.

¹¹⁶ Letter, Mike and Marilyn Gorski to the Headquarter Office, September 14, 1950, PPP, Box 5, File 22, UI, Iowa City, IA.

explained the reason she had to resign from the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom as such: "I have my job to consider and my place in the community life."¹¹⁷

"Enemies Among Us"

Behind such practices of self-censorship, social implementation, and political initiatives was a large body of common citizenry, or at least the image of it. After all, the Truman administration set up the mechanism of the Loyalty and Security Program in March, 1947 not because it perceived actual security risks in the government but, primarily, because it saw political opportunities in the wake of the decisive defeat of Democratic Party in November, 1946.¹¹⁸ Many employers, too, were not worried about any particular threat posed by "reds." What concerned them more was the deterioration of their company's public image that might result from retaining people suspected of being communists or communist sympathizers.¹¹⁹ Many leftists' self-restraint and self-censorship, likewise, was the result of personal fears that "other" people might criticize them. In a sense, they were responding to what they believed to be the mainstream opinions of the large majority of the common people.

What, then, were such opinions? There are many ways to measure popular attitudes, including consulting opinion polls, surveys, popular magazines, and memoirs from that period. Another way is to analyze letters sent to politicians and

¹¹⁷ Ellen Schrecker, "McCarthyism: Political Repression and the Fear of Communism," *Social Research* Vol. 71, No 3 (2004), 1071.

¹¹⁸ Ellen Schrecker, "McCarthyism: Political Repression and the Fear of Communism," 1046.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, 1047 and 1069.

governmental officials. These letters, to be sure, do not represent any particular group, but often reflect subjective views of individuals in society in a vivid way. One quite common thread among such letters was American nationalism. A woman in Wheeling, West Virginia wrote to the President on August 9, 1950:

Why must our boys die fighting Communists in Korea and they are allowed to roam freely among us and go on with their fight against us? In being so careful to guard the Constitution[al] Right[s] of this bunch of traitors, Congress is not guarding the rights of our true citizens. [...]. This is pure nonsense [...]. Let's drive these traitors underground and then dig them out like rats. Let's make America safe for Americans.¹²⁰

A woman in Wisconsin similarly wrote to the White House:

I say each and every person who does not care for American ways of living in freedom and liberty, but prefers Russian ways should be made to go and live there. [...]. May the Good Lord, give you...strength and courage to discharge those who are not 100% True American.¹²¹

Another woman, in Brewer, Maine, took a pen in August 11, 1950:

Mr. President:

In this hour of great trial and tribulation for the peoples of the world, the office of the President of the United States must indeed be a tremendous responsibility. That responsibility should be faced squarely and in a typical American manner!

I have before me the complete text of your message to Congress, concerning the subversive action within the United States, and I assure you that this letter is not prompted by hysteria.

The threat of communism in our own country is as far-reaching and dangerous as anywhere in the world. We must band together to rid us of this scourge. The excuses must be thrown out as having no place in this fight for the preservation of human dignity! While our men are in Korea fighting the communists and all they stand for, there are thousands of these same communists going about their dastardly plotting right here in these United States! I implore you to exercise your power as President and grant the F.B.I. the right to round up these criminals. Do we compromise with thieves, murderers and the like? No! And yet these thieves of decency go about openly, carrying on their meetings, printing their newspapers of revolution, endeavoring to undermine our every effort, and this under the guise of freedom of speech and rights! The evasive issue of not wanting to drive the communists underground is a tragic interpretation of the Bill of Rights! The most

¹²⁰ Letter, Mary Margaret Freese to Harry S. Truman, August 9, 1950, PHST, Box 881, OF 263, HSTL, Independence, MO.

¹²¹ Letter, Mary Ann Matugeg to Harry S. Truman, August 25, 1950, PHST, Box 881, OF 263, HSTL, Independence, MO.

dangerous communists are already operating underground! They must be ferreted out and communism must be destroyed!

Mr. President, talk to the people of the United Nations, assure them that we will work unceasingly towards this goal, and then live up to this promise! The day communism is outlawed will bring another glorious page in the history of freedom!¹²²

Not only the president, but other major politicians received hundreds of such letters.

Democratic Senator from Nevada Pat McCarran, for instance, was urged to bring justice to those who were un-American, who were “hoping to destroy our American way of life.”¹²³ By the same token, a Republican Senator from California was urged to see what the nation wanted: “We want some Americans with real old fashioned ideas and ideals to represent us in Washington.”¹²⁴

What is clear in these letters is sheer hatred of “communists,” as well as enormous affection for “America.” What is *not* so clear is who exactly “communists” were and what, precisely, “America” was. These are taken for granted. The authors of these letters did not specifically spell these out, not because they did not know, but because, perhaps, the definitions were too clear to them to mention. The meaning of “America,” for them, was part of common sense, and the meaning of “communism” was, likewise, less about political ideas or institutions than anything deemed unharmonious with such images of “America.”

The crux of the matter, therefore, had more to do with the state of social order than political ideas or machinery. A father of nine children in the tiny village of McGrath, Alaska, for instance, wrote that he would not hesitate to make any

¹²² Letter, Maryorie Quigg to Harry S. Truman, August 11, 1950, PHST, Box 881 OF 263, HSTL, Independence, MO.

¹²³ Letter, Violette Speciale to Pat McCarran, December 17, 1950, PPM, Box 51, NHS, Reno, NV.

¹²⁴ Letter, C.S. Smith to William Knowland, December 4, 1950, Papers of William Knowland (hereafter PWK), Box 242, Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley, CA.

sacrifice in fighting communism, and that he would do this because he would like his nine children “to grow up in a lawful and orderly society.”¹²⁵ Like this father, many just wanted to defend their way of life. Seen this way, as one of the authors of the letters above expressed, these should not be considered hysterical, irrational responses. Rather, such attitudes were considered righteous and patriotic, and, thus, many Americans embraced them in order to defend their communities and families.

Yet, here existed the politics of inclusion and exclusion. What kind of communities and families did people want to defend? In other words, what kinds of communities and families did they *not* want to protect? What kinds of things should be considered “American” and what were not “American”? These questions were actually more difficult to articulate than many letters writers would assume. This was because the definitions and realities of community, family, and society were radically changing in the United States in the postwar period, primarily due to various social changes arising from the turbulent experiences of the Great Depression and World War II.

These two gigantic historical events altered social relationships, generating new social conflicts in the wake of the war. Such an emergence of conflict was particularly notable in the areas of racial, labor, and gender relations. In brief, many African Americans who fought in World War II began advocating a “double victory,” meaning a victory not just over foreign enemies but also over domestic discrimination, beginning an escalation of their civil rights movements. Likewise, quite a few women, who acquired jobs and social status in wartime, wanted to

¹²⁵ Letter, Ralph W. Slone to E. L. Bartlett, December 5, 1950, PHST, Box 1307, OF 471B, HSTL, Independence, MO.

retain new social positions beyond “mother” and “wife,” and many workers, who had obtained new authority during the New Deal period, fiercely fought management in the early postwar period. Finally, homosexuals, who found fellows in the army and did not return to their rural hometowns after the war, began creating a new subculture in urban areas. It is interesting to note that these areas of transformation were exactly where suppression was most fierce in the so-called McCarthy era. Such social oppression spread broadly but quietly because most casualties did not have outlets to speak up. My next section examines such actual social conflicts, which were silenced in the name of anti-communism.

“Society Must Be Defended”

If so-called McCarthyism was not just an anti-communist purge, what was it? What kinds of struggles lay behind the banner of the Cold War? Who purged who and for what purposes? This section briefly surveys casualties in several areas: race, labor, gender, and various social norms and common sense. First and foremost, among the people severely repressed during the McCarthy era were African Americans and civil rights activists (Picture 8). While the effects of anti-communism and the Cold War on these groups have been well researched, recent scholars have tended to focus more on the “beneficial” aspects of the Cold War for the civil rights movements.¹²⁶ Yet, as historian Manning Marable argues, anti-communist politics was, indeed, a “destructive force within civil rights groups, and more broadly within

¹²⁶ See, for instance, Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, NJ, 2000); Elaine Tyler May, “Postscript to the 1999 edition,” *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* revised and updated ed. (New York, 1999), 205-208.

the black community.”¹²⁷ In fact, an African American leader in New York City, Coleman Young, recalled: “It was all but impossible for a black person to avoid the Communist label as long as he or she advocated civil rights with any degree of vigor.”¹²⁸

Similar misfortune befell not only African American activists but the Progressive Party’s white southerners, who had advocated for the abolition of segregation.¹²⁹ It is not surprising that, in the South, elite conservatives and the white working class adopted red scare politics, which in many ways, as historian Jeff Wood describes, were a “byproduct of the region’s massive resistance to integration.” In the Korean War period, both elites and grassroots southerners escalated their critiques of civil rights activists as “communistic” and “un-American,” contributing to the defense of the southern way of life—segregation—in the name of patriotism and to the marginalization of elements of social conflict in the name of national security.

Similar sentiments appeared in growing northern cities, where the influx of African Americans and Mexican Americans in the wartime and postwar periods created and exacerbated racial tensions among residents. In Detroit, for instance, more than half of those polled expressed “unfavorable” attitudes toward integration, while only eighteen percent expressed “favorable” views toward the “full-

¹²⁷ Manning Marable, “Series Editor’s Forward” in Robbie Lieberman and Clarence Lang, *Anticommunism and the African American Freedom Movement: Other Side of Story* (New York, 2009), xi.

¹²⁸ Martha Biondi, *To Stand and Fight: The Struggle For Civil Rights in Postwar New York City* (Boston, 2003), 190.

¹²⁹ Letter, Herman Wright to Carter Wesley, PPP, UI, Iowa City, IA.

acceptance of Negroes.”¹³⁰ Such racial tension on the ground flared over public housing programs for lower-income households in cities like Detroit, Milwaukee, and Los Angeles. In the late 1940s, white residents criticized a public housing program as a “Negro housing project,” expressing their concerns about the “colored problem”—or “Black invasion”—in their traditionally white neighborhood because, those locals thought, “Eighty percent [of Blacks] are animals” and “They think they own the city.”¹³¹ One irate housewife in Detroit wrote: “What about us, who cannot afford to move to a better location and are surrounded by colored? [...]. Most of us invested our life’s savings in property and now we are in constant fear that the neighbor will sell its property to people of a different race.”¹³²

With the progress of the Korean War in the fall of 1950, local opponents of public housing programs reframed their attitudes, condemning the same programs not in terms of racial struggles but those of the Cold War struggle. One resident of Los Angeles, for instance, wrote a letter to a local councilman, describing the city’s housing program as the “Russian Communistic Socialistic Housing Project, which is trying to destroy our freedom, liberty, and our free enterprise system.”¹³³ Amidst this sea change, one city council member and former supporter of the housing program changed position, attacking it as the “creeping cancer of socialism which will bring us to socialism and social decay.”¹³⁴ The application of this new Cold War logic to existing racial struggles can be found in regard to other cities’ similar

¹³⁰ Thomas J. Sugrue, “Crabgrass-Roots Politics: Race, Rights, and the Reaction against Liberalism in the Urban North, 1940-1964,” *Journal of American History*, 82, no.2, (1995): 555.

¹³¹ Ibid, 556.

¹³² Ibid, 555.

¹³³ Don Parson, “The Decline of Public Housing and the Politics of the Red Scare: The Significance of the Los Angeles Public Housing War,” *Journal of Urban History*, 33, no. 3 (2007): 407.

¹³⁴ Ibid, 407.

projects, such as those in Milwaukee and Detroit, where criticism of housing projects successfully slowed and trimmed the speed and size of projects. In these cases, too, white neighborhoods applied McCarthyite anticommunist logic to solve social and racial conflicts.¹³⁵

In a similar manner, a national health care program was killed during the Korean War period. This program had previously been opposed by the majority of doctors and nurses because, they argued, it would lower the quality of medical service, science, and institutions in the United States.¹³⁶ With the progress of the Korean War, as in the case of public housing programs, opponents now utilized a new Cold War logic to solve an existing conflict. Immediately following the outbreak of the Korean War, the president of the American Medical Association made a speech, aired on radio networks nationwide, harshly censuring state-controlled medical care; he said: "American medicine has become the focal point in a struggle which may determine whether America remains free, or whether we are to become a Socialist State."¹³⁷ Such a critique worked well. With mounting criticism, fashioned according to Cold War logic, Democrats abandoned the national health care program in 1950.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ See, for instance, Thomas J. Sugrue, "Crabgrass-Roots Politics: Race, Rights, and the Reaction against Liberalism in the Urban North, 1940-1964," *Journal of American History*, 82, no.2, (1995):551-578; Don Parson, "The Decline of Public Housing and the Politics of the Red Scare: The Significance of the Los Angeles Public Housing War," *Journal of Urban History*, 33, no. 3 (2007): 400-417; and Eric Fure-Slocum, "Housing, Race, and the Cold War in a Labor City," in Shelton Stromquist ed., *Labor's Cold War: Local Politics in a Global Context* (Urbana, IL, 2008), 163-203.

¹³⁶ Letter, Alabama State Association of Nurse Anesthetists to Pat McCarran, March 17, 1950, Box 51, PPM, NHS, Reno, NV; Letter, Reno Business and Professional Women's Club to Pat McCarran, June 19, 1950, Box 51, PPM, NHS, Reno, NV.

¹³⁷ "Presidential Inaugural Address by Elmer L. Henderson M.D., President, American Medical Association," June 27, 1950, PPM, Box 51, NHS, Reno, NV.

¹³⁸ About national health program.

Another kind of social conflict completely silenced in this period was labor disputes. One political cartoon in the *Kansas City Star* captured an ideal version of labor-management-government relations; in this drawing, “Management,” “American People,” and “Labor” agreed on Uncle Sam’s “Defense Program,” as if it were a reality (Picture 9).¹³⁹ Needless to say, the actual situation was not so neat. A “consensus,” if it existed, was created not necessarily through consensus but, often, through coercion. At a Buick plant in Flint, Michigan, for instance, right-wing workers purged “radical” and “communistic” workers in the fall of 1950. At a Ford plant in Linden, New Jersey, likewise, workers who tried to pass out “Hands Off Korea” leaflets were rounded up, beaten up, and literally thrown out of the factory. As historian Seth Wigderson explicates, right-wingers utilized anti-communist logic to fight opposing factions, and conservative employers utilized the same logic to dismiss radical workers, resolving tensions in workplaces.¹⁴⁰ Moreover, opinion polls throughout the postwar period indicated that the majority of those who polled were annoyed with the behavior and demands of labor unions (Picture 10).¹⁴¹

Another group suppressed through the application of Cold War logic was gays and lesbians.¹⁴² According to historian John D’Emilio, dismissals of “sexual

¹³⁹ “We Owe It To Our Fighting Men,” *Kansas City Star*, September 13, 1950.

¹⁴⁰ Seth Wigderson, “The Wages of Anticommunism: U.S. Labor and the Korean War,” in Shelton Stromquist ed., *Labor’s Cold War: Local Politics in a Global Context* (Urbana, IL, 2008), 231.

¹⁴¹ See, for instance, “Strike in Public Service Industries,” April 17, 1946; “Strikes and Lockouts,” April 29, 1946; “Labor Strike,” May 29, 1946; “Labor Strikes,” June 14, 1946; “Strikes and Lockouts,” November 22, 1946; “Factory Workers’ Wage,” January 13, 1947; and “Most Important Problem,” January 31, 1947, in *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, 1935-1971: Vol. 1, 1935-1948* (New York: Random House, 1972), 570, 573, 580, 583, 608, 618, and 623. All of these Gallup’s polls generally show that the majority of those who polled had negative opinions toward labor. However, as George Lipsitz suggests, other polls show gradual increase in the support for labor in early 1946. See Lipsitz, *Rainbow at Midnight*, 116.

¹⁴² See, for instance, David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago, 2004).

perverts” from civilian posts in the federal government averaged only five per month from 1947 to the early months of 1950. The figure increased twelve fold in the second half of the year. Eventually, a total of more than 800 persons were fired from governmental sectors as a result of “investigation into allegations of homosexuality.”¹⁴³ The logic maintained that their sexual aberrations made them “pressure prone,” maintaining that they might leak classified information if a communist took advantage of fears of exposure. It is important to note that the subculture of gays and lesbians increased its visibility in society after the nationwide coming-out experience of World War II, challenging conventional sexual roles.¹⁴⁴¹⁴⁵

By the same token, similar repression, visible and invisible, was enforced in regard to another element of the change in gender relations: working women and feminism in general—a phenomenon that grew through experiences of the Depression and World War II. Even before the end of the war, working mothers began facing criticism that their jobs really belonged to men, that their real happiness was in marriage and child-care, and that a “good” mother sought no fulfillment outside the home (Picture 11).¹⁴⁶ Such a tendency accelerated under the name of the “civil defense” program that was revived during the Korean War. One advertising film, for example, proudly told viewers that the civil defense program would be a “revival of old American tradition,” saying:

¹⁴³ John D’Emilio, “The Homosexual Menace: The Politics of Sexuality in Cold War America,” in John D’Emilio, *Making Trouble: Essays on Gay History, Politics, and the University* (New York, 1992), 229.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 256.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, 234.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 236; Molly Ladd-Taylor and Lauri Umansky, *“Bad” Mothers: The Politics of Blame in Twentieth-Century America* (New York, 1998), 12-14.

When the Indians struck, the man would run the stockade, the woman would load the rifles, the older children would take care of the small [...]. Each member of the group had an assigned job to do in the common defense of his community.

Simply speaking, the implication was that a man works outside, and a woman stays at home, helping with men's work. Moreover, it is interesting to note that the metaphor of "family" imposed certain social roles, such as father, mother, and children, as given categories, implicitly discouraging individuals to cross boundaries. As historian Elaine Taylor May points out, the logic of national security functioned not simply as containment of communism on a global level, but also containment of the activities of women at home, functioning to restore and maintain traditional order at a domestic level.

It is no wonder that advocates of "anticommunism" directed their criticism toward another element of social disorder: immigration. One, Nevada Senator Pat McCarran, whose name was often attached to the Internal Security Act of 1950, the so-called Anti-Communist Act, for instance, said:

The time has long since passed when we can afford to open our borders indiscriminately to give unstinting hospitality to any person whose purpose, whose ideological goal, is to overthrow our institutions and replace them with the evil oppression of totalitarianism.¹⁴⁷

Concerning the deterioration of "Americaness," McCarran argued that the United States should accept immigrants only from Western Europe, not from Southern and Eastern Europe, let alone Asia or Latin America.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ Pat McCarran, Speech, 1950, PPM, Box 50, NHS, Reno, NV.

¹⁴⁸ Robert Newman, "The Lingering Poison of McCarranism," Address at the Carolinas Speech Communication Association Meeting, Clemson, September 28, 1984, in PPM, Scrap Clipping File, NHS, Reno, NV; For McCarran's primary obsession with immigration issue, see, for example, Michael J. Ybarra, *Washington Gone Crazy: Senator Pat McCarran and the Great American Communist Hunt* (Hanover, 2004).

Indeed, the call for “America for Americans” was celebrated in the year of 1950.¹⁴⁹ This explains the enormous popularity of “one-hundred percent American” senator Joseph McCarthy in the second half of the year; at this time, he received two thousand invitations to talk, more than all other Republican spokesmen combined.¹⁵⁰ Richard Nixon, a rookie candidate for California Senator in the midterm election in 1950, did not miss an opportunity to fashion himself an “All American Senator,” accusing a rival candidate, Helen G. Douglas, of “[fighting] everything which has made America great,” and “[fostering] everything we consider un-American.”¹⁵¹ Needless to say, his tactics worked; Nixon made his debut as a freshman senator the following spring.

The “communist” label was convenient for many elite and grassroots conservatives because it was vague enough to use to attack anyone who had been critical of society’s conventional norms. Senator Walter Judd claimed that “Communists emphasize all the bad conditions in our country—Jim Crowism, the discrimination, the slums, inadequate education or medical care.”¹⁵² Logic of this kind was versatile, as it was often used in reverse; someone who emphasized bad conditions must be a “communist.” One anticommunist pamphlet, in fact, included a series of typical Q and A’s: “How can you tell a Communist?” The answer read: “Get

¹⁴⁹ Letter, Richard Brown to Harry S. Truman, July 10, 1951, PHST, Box 1330, OF 471-B, HSTL, Independence, MO.

¹⁵⁰ Robert Justin Goldstein, *Political Repression in Modern America from 1870 to the Present* (Boston, 1978), 325.

¹⁵¹ Letter, John L. Linn to William Knowland, October 24, 1950, Papers of William Knowland (hereafter PWK), Cartoon 90, “Political Files, 1950 Campaigns,” Bancroft Library, UCB, Berkeley, CA; Letter, H. A. Jarvis to William Knowland, October 1, 1950, PWK, Cartoon 90, “Political Files, 1950 Campaigns,” Bancroft Library, UCB, Berkeley, CA.

¹⁵² Walter Judd, “Does China Mean World War III?” Speech delivered before the Economic Club of New York, March 13, 1951, Papers of Walter Judd (hereafter PWJ), Box 40, Folder 1, Hoover Institution, Stanford University, Stanford, CA.

him in an argument about the United States. He can tell you plenty of things wrong with this country.”¹⁵³

Seen in this way, the silencing accomplished through “anticommunist” politics during the so-called McCarthy era was indeed more multifarious than we usually think, involving African Americans, civil rights activists, radical labor members, gays and lesbians, working women, and immigrants, as well as advocates of public housing programs and national health care, and so forth. What they shared was not a communist ideology but a tendency to challenge conventional social values, implicitly or explicitly. They represented newly emerging social conflicts through various kinds of social change during the Great Depression and World War II. In other words, the actual nature of McCarthyism had less to do with anticommunism than a more general conservative backlash, not necessarily in terms of political conservatism, but in terms of social conservatism.

Such a tendency showed up clearly in questions posed in various loyalty hearings, which covered topics including not only political ideology, pacifism, the Korean War, and the Cold War, but also religion, church attendance, race relations, and sexual morality.¹⁵⁴ Questions asked in loyalty and security hearings, for instance, included:

Have you ever danced with a white girl?
Have you ever had dinner with a mixed group?
Have you ever had Negroes in your home?
Did you ever write a letter to the Red Cross about segregation of blood?
Do you go to church?

¹⁵³ United States Congress House Un-American Activities Committee, *100 Things You Should Know About Communism* revised ed. (Washington, 1950), 70.

¹⁵⁴ Ralph S. Brown, *Loyalty and Security: Employment Tests in the United States* (New Haven, 1958), 492.

What do you think about sex before marriage?¹⁵⁵

To be sure, examinees could avoid answering these questions on the grounds of the Fifth Amendment, as many did. Yet, quite a few simply found that their employers arbitrarily dismissed them or urged them to resign. An employee at the State Department, for instance, was urged to resign because “her first child arrived too soon after her marriage.” Several men were dismissed on grounds of “fornication” and “[keeping] a mistress while on remote station” and so on.¹⁵⁶

It is reasonable to say that so-called McCarthyism purged not only communists and communist sympathizers but also functioned to identify “un-American activities,” restore order, and purify society. It is no wonder to find a parallel between the actual functions of McCarthyism and those of civil defense programs, both of which developed in American society in the postwar period, and both of which arguably pointed to the “defense” of social order. Contrary to its appearance, the essence of civil defense programs did not primarily aim at the protection of individual lives; The underlying motivation was rather to prevent “social chaos,” such as mass panic and social disorder, which was believed to happen aftermath of nuclear attack.¹⁵⁷ Thus, it make sense that many people preferring to maintain social order, regardless policymakers or private citizens, actively participated in waves of McCarthyism and civil defense programs as a means to restore and maintain preferable order at home.

¹⁵⁵ Eleanor Bontecou, *The Federal Loyalty-Security Program* (Ithaca, NY, 1953), 138-39; Goldstein, *Political Repression in Modern America* (1978), 303-304; and Schrecker, “McCarthyism: Political Repression and the Fear of Communism,” *Social Research* Vol. 71, No 3 (2004), 1067.

¹⁵⁶ Brown, *Loyalty and Security* (1958), 261.

¹⁵⁷ Guy Oakes, *The Imaginary War: Civil Defense and American Cold War Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 38-42.

Viewing McCarthyism as anticommunist politics, we tend to describe those who were oppressed even though they were not communists or communist sympathizers as innocent victims of false accusations. This view characterizes this period as a time of groundless attacks and malicious slanders, which, later, the Wisconsin Senator was believed to personify. However, seeing McCarthyism as social screening and suppression of nonconformists, dissenters, and malcontents in an attempt to protect desirable order and harmony in society, we can recognize that the diverse groups who were suppressed were the real targets, rather than innocent victims. Simply put, they were “culprits” of causing, or potentially causing, social disorder. In a sense, the entire phenomenon of McCarthyism can be seen as a mechanism of inclusion and exclusion to defend harmonious society.

The term “McCarthyism” cleverly concealed such an essence of the phenomenon. Perceiving it as McCarthyism, we tend to view it as the result of a Wisconsin senator’s reckless and irrational behavior. McCarthy himself could not make a counterargument, because he died soon after, in 1957. After all, a dead man tells no tales. Placing the responsibility on the senator, the term has obscured, first and foremost, the liability of members of the Democratic Party and major labor unions. As historians Philip Jenkins and Ellen Schrecker, have revealed, liberals were motivators rather than simple victims.¹⁵⁸ What is more, however, the term skillfully hides the culpability of ordinary people who participated and conducted social purges within communities, workplaces, and families. Framing the phenomenon as McCarthyism, thus, blurs the actors and essence of “McCarthyism”:

¹⁵⁸ Philip Jenkins, *Cold War At Home* (1999) and Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes* (1998).

tens of thousands of elite and grassroots “assailants” and “victims,” who fought postwar social struggles over desirable order in American society.

Backlash of Grassroots Social Conservatism

Seeing the phenomena of various domestic suppressions circa 1950-1951 in Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States, this chapter sheds new light on our understanding not only of each occurrence, such as the Red Purge, anti-strike and ant-Labour trends, and McCarthyism, respectively, but also about the meaning of the simultaneity of these events as a whole. Each phenomenon, to be sure, had its own history and local roots, and they developed in its own way, individually. Yet, they shared particular characteristics with a certain aim. Most existing literature on each subject would point to it as Cold War suppression aiming at the elimination of communists and communist sympathizers, viewing each as a consequential event, an aftereffect of the global Cold War. This conventional view appears most plausible when we accept the “reality” of the Cold War and approach each subject through that particular lens.

Taking off the Cold War lens, and looking into local and social disputes on the ground, however, the situations look different. What these phenomena shared seems to be, rather, a backlash of social conservatism aimed at the restoration of “normal” order and social relations, through purging thousands of nonconformists at home. Viewed in this way, domestic suppressions we have examined in this chapter can be seen as parts of worldwide phenomenon of domestic purging, which broke out in the early years of the Korean War: the Suppression of

Counterrevolutionaries in China, the White Terror in Taiwan, the crackdown on “un-Filipino” activities in the Philippines, in addition to the Red Purge in Japan, anti-strike trend in Britain, and McCarthyism in the United States.

Taken together, these events that developed separately can be seen as parts of a simultaneous global phenomenon, based on contemporaneous experiences of the postwar period. First and foremost, all of these societies experienced World War II and various kinds of dynamic social change, which provoked various kinds of social, cultural, and political conflicts at home. Second, these various domestic purges more or less appeared as backlashes to “solve” these local conflicts, aiming to tranquilize “chaotic” situations, creating “harmonious” social order in each society. Third, the outbreak of the Korean War, which was witnessed concurrently across the globe evoked many people of memories of World War II, providing an atmosphere of doubt and fear that justified and escalated the “purification” of society in many places in the world. Fourth, all of these “purifying” campaigns were developed at a crossroads of state mobilization and people’s participation, functioning to protect, or, in some cases, create unity through utilizing a binary distinction between “us” and “them.” Fifth, last but not least, in each instance, the Cold War logic of the East-West confrontation proved its utility in silencing domestic disagreements and “resolving” local struggles under a banner of “security” on a perpetual basis.

Viewed in this way, what becomes clear is the actuality of local conflicts, the imagined nature of the Cold War, and the social needs of such an imagined reality to overcome “war” at home. To put it bluntly, in a sense, the actual divide existed not

so much between Eastern and Western states, but within each society, with each, in turn, requiring the continuation of the Cold War to maintain “harmonious” order and life at home. From this angle, each instance of local suppression was not so much the result of the Cold War, but itself was part of the engine, a component, of the Cold War that contributed to the making and maintenance of a gigantic imagined reality in the postwar world. The architects and participants of this world were, thus, not only power holders in the metropolis of each society, but also millions of ordinary people in cities and villages all over the world who consciously and unconsciously engaged in the “purification” of their societies and maintenance of social order at home. It was such an ascent of people’s participations in and societal needs of the imagined reality of the Cold War that made a particular discourse into the actuality of the postwar period, internally functioning to sustain and perpetuate the “real” Cold War for decades to follow.

Chapter 7 Pictures:

Picture 1-1:

“Students' Demonstration Opposing the
Red Purge at Tokyo University “
Mainichi Shinbun
October 5, 1950,



Picture 1-2:

"The Waseda University Incident; The Burning of Residents' Registration Cards"

1950, Tokyo, Japan

No. S5-04-009

Ohara Institute for Social Studies

Tokyo, Japan



In this picture, students at Waseda University burnt their residents' registration cards to express their opposition to rearmament and possible conscription.

Picture 2-1:

"Communist May Day Riots, Tokyo"

May 02, 1952

Tokyo, Japan

Time and Life Pictures



A sign carried read, "Oppose Rearmament, Refuse Conscription."

Source:<http://images.google.com/hosted/life/l?imgurl=00503bd24dec1455>

Photographer: Margaret Bourke-White

Picture 2-2:

"The 22nd May Day"
May 1951, Tokyo, Japan
No. S2-03-007
Ohara Institute for Social Studies
Tokyo, Japan



Picture 2-3:

“Communist May Day Riots”
May 1, 1950, Tokyo, Japan
Time and Life pictures



Source: <http://images.google.com/hosted/life/l?imgurl=e1580d75b031c051>
Photographer: Margaret Bourke-White

Picture 2-4:

“Communist May Day Riots”
May 1, 1950, Tokyo, Japan
Time and Life Pictures



Source: <http://images.google.com/hosted/life/l?imgurl=1d0222e33c1c0105>

Photographer: Michael Rougier

Picture 2-5:

“May Day in Tokyo”

May 1, 1952

No. 12-29-3-8

Collection of Photographs
MacArthur Memorial Archives



Picture 2-6:

**“Communist May Day Riots”
May 1, 1950, Tokyo, Japan
Time and Life Pictures**



Source: <http://images.google.com/hosted/life/l?imgurl=6726935959277c56>
Photographer: Michael Rougier

Picture 3:

“May Day Demonstration in Tokyo”

May 1, 1952

No. PHB0167

The Photographic Collection of Georges Dimitria Boria
MacArthur Memorial Archives, Norfolk, VA.



Picture 4:

“Constitution Promulgation Day & Hirohito”

November 3, 1946

Time and Life Pictures



Source: <http://images.google.com/hosted/life/l?imgurl=32933c141200dbbb>

Photographer: John Florea

Picture 5:

“Last Strike; Dock Strike”
Salisbury, UK, 1951
Working Class Movement Library
Salford, United Kingdom



Picture 6:

"Desire Caught By Tail"

October 11, 1950

Daily Mail



Picture 7:

"Red Propaganda Discovered Hidden in Children's Card Collections"

December 14, 1950

Los Angeles Times



Picture 8:
Demonstration, 1946-48?
Collection of Photographs
Records of the Progressive Party (MsC 160)
University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City, Iowa



Picture 9:

"We Owe It To Our Fighting Men"

September 13, 1950

Kansas City Star



Picture 10:

"MGM workers on strike, studio workers passing picket lines"
Hollywood, CA, US
October 1946



Source: <http://images.google.com/hosted/life/l?imgurl=673b6b21d8450dd6>
Photographer: Peter Stackpole

Picture 11:

"Women for Peace Discover D.C. Can Be Chilly in August"

August 9, 1950

Washington Times Herald



Conclusion: People's War—The Cold War as Social Politics

The present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space. We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed. We are at a moment, I believe, when our experience of the world is less that of a long life developing through time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein.

Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces"¹

There is a general folk belief, derived largely from Burke and the nineteenth-century historians, that political stability is of slow, coral-like growth; the result of time, circumstances, prudence, experience, wisdom, slowly building up over the centuries. Nothing is, I think, farther from the truth [...]. Political stability, when it comes, often happens to a society quite quickly, as suddenly as water becomes ice.

J. H. Plumb²

This study explores the rapid solidification of the "reality" of the Cold War in the early postwar era, particularly during the Korean War, intending to reveal the constructed and imagined nature of the conflict. What made the Cold War different from other wars, such as the Korean War or Vietnam War, was that it did not exist in a particular time and place. Rather, it existed not because it existed, but because people thought it existed. It was, in a sense, an imagined reality, which came to be shared and consolidated globally and simultaneously in many parts of the world at the time of the Korean War. During the decades that followed, the Cold War appeared to be the "reality" of the world, and, thus, questions raised at that time tended, more or less, to focus on how it came to happen and why—a manner of

¹ Michael Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," Jay Miskowicz, trans., in *Diacritics* (Spring 1986): 22, cited in Charles S. Maier, "Consigning the Twentieth Century to History: Alternative Narratives for the Modern Era," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 105, No. 3 (Jun., 2000), 825.

² J. H. Plumb quoted in Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (New York: Penguin, 2006), 241.

research characterized by looking back to the “origins” of the conflict from a viewpoint accepting of its actuality. Today, the Cold War seems to be an event of a past long gone, and the nature of inquiry has changed. Now the questions are: What was the so-called Cold War? How did it emerge and solidify in the early postwar period? How did millions of people in the world believed in such an imagined reality, and why?

These are the basic questions raised in this study. Answering them, however, is a much more complicated task than one might expect. Reasons for this are numerous. To begin with, the notion that the Cold War began immediately following the end of World War II and affected political, economic, social, and cultural settings in many places of the world thereafter has remained firmly entrenched, even today. As a result, many diverse phenomena occurring at that time have been observed and historicized through a Cold War lens, highlighting a particular set of facts as more meaningful while marginalizing other sets as less meaningful, and, then, such cognition and knowledge concerning various phenomena in this period, in turn, has buttressed the “reality” of the Cold War—a continual cycle that has reinforced the world of the Cold War at that time and since. Furthermore, given the gigantic scale of the conflict, considerable number of societies involved, and lengthy period of time spanned, scholars can easily feel daunted by the amount of work required in obtaining a broader viewpoint on it.

Therefore, this dissertation has taken the following steps. First, instead of dealing with decades of the Cold War, it limits its focus to the period between 1945 and 1953, in particular, the months in the early period of the Korean War between

June 1950 and the spring of 1951, a historical moment that fundamentally defined the ways in which a number of societies would behave in the decades that followed. For the most difficult task of breaking through the Cold War lens, it was necessary to take a number of detours; my research has revisited various phenomena, decisions and actions that have been commonly conceived as effects of the Cold War, and re-examined each in light of local histories and actors. The central purpose of such a re-examination is to show that each had its own local and social contexts as it evolved.

This approach, however, has led to a vexatious outcome. Because it has to discuss local contexts in considerable detail, this dissertation has to include a number of diverse and seemingly disparate topics, which have been marginalized and concealed by the Cold War fantasy: domestic politics, election campaigns, racism, anticolonialism, decolonization, nation-building, labor movements, student movements, feminist movements, massacres, mass firings, and various social suppressions and purges in China, Taiwan, Japan, Britain, and the United States, as well as the Chinese Revolution, U.S. occupation of Japan, postcolonial Taiwanese and Korean politics, and Washington's and Beijing's foreign and domestic policies during the Korean War.

As a result, some readers might simply be confused. They might want to have a much clearer, more straightforward explanation of what the Cold War was, rather than reading about complex local problems in different places. However, that is exactly what many people seemed to demand in the early postwar period. The logic of the Cold War was attractive for many people because it provided a seemingly clear, coherent, simple, and logical explanation for what were in reality messier and

more chaotic situations at home and abroad. That is why, instead of quickly providing a clear line, this dissertation seeks to reveal intricate stories in view of local and social history. The ultimate aim here is to demonstrate the heterogeneity of realities, revealing actual conflicts underneath the Cold War logic.

Through such lengthy and multitudinous detours, this research makes a series of points that characterize the consolidation of the “reality” of the Cold War during the Korean War period. First, the world of the Cold War materialized not simply through decisions and actions of particular policymakers in a specific country. Rather, the “reality” gained its verisimilitude as a consequence of unintentional interactions among many participants through a process of domestic translation of foreign events through local lenses. The term “misperception” has often been used to explain this process, but needs more explanation. By nature, “misperception” presumes the existence of a “true” perception, drawing a clear line between “understanding” and “misunderstanding.” Yet, in studying multiple societies at the same time, it becomes clear that there is no such clear distinction; “misperception” is just one way of understanding, based on perceptions in different contexts. In fact, any “misperception”—like the common Chinese perception of America invading China, or the widespread American perception of Moscow attacking the West—was, in some ways, a “correct” and “rational” understanding in view of local and historical backgrounds at that time. In other words, underneath the image of a unified, coherent Cold War, people in different locations were fighting different kinds of wars. The “reality” of the global conflict was developed and cemented through such a chain of reactions and series of local translations. In other

words, the “reality” cannot be realized without interactions through local translation; it was a product of relationality.

The binding knot that combined such processes of fighting different kinds of wars under the image of a unified Cold War was, more or less, memories and experiences of World War II. After all, for many people in Europe, East and Southeast Asia, and the United States, the war was not just an event in the past. Because of its massive scale of mobilization and participation, many held diverse kinds of memories of the war. Furthermore, because of its shocking cruelty, such memories tended to be uncompromising, as if they were the only “truth,” which, in turn, functioned as lessons constraining the ways in which people observed and contemplated the future of the world. In a sense, it was not just a tragedy in the past; rather, it was an image of the future.

No wonder, therefore, that many policymakers and ordinary people feared the outbreak of World War III at the time of the Korean War, which many interpreted as the first “hot” war between the two superpowers—a way of thinking that, in turn, consolidated a specific perception of the world outside Korea as barely remaining at the stages of “cold” war. This point might become clearer if we think about the fact that the Cold War was not an entirely *universal* phenomenon in the early 1950s. There was, in fact, a difference in the degree of verisimilitude of the “reality” of the Cold War; in general, it achieved a high degree where World War II left massive scars, while retaining a low degree in areas where damage from the war was relatively less harsh, including Latin America, Africa, and South Asia. Although many countries in these areas later joined in the Cold War world in the late 1950s

and 1960s, they were not so much inside the “reality” of the Cold War circa 1950. Further research is needed, but it can be said that the “reality” of the Cold War was built on the ground of memories and experiences of World War II, at least at its moment of materialization.

As long as the majority of the population supported the “reality” of the Cold War, policymakers in the metropolis of each society could not get away from it; nor did they wish to escape from it. When the United States decided to enter the Korean War and crossed the 38th Parallel northward, and when China decided to enter the war and crossed the parallel southward, these decisions were not so much made through clean-cut Cold War thinking. Nor were they simply results of leaders’ personalities and ideologies. More than anything else, policymakers in both Washington and Beijing paid significant attention to contingent situations surrounding them, including domestic politics, election campaigns, social and cultural circumstances, and popular attitudes, contemplating possible outcomes and repercussions.

Such a pattern clearly appeared when the war became unpopular in the United States in the spring of 1951.³ With a rapid shift in social attitudes, some politicians quickly and quietly modified their stances. Robert Taft, who had been one of the most hawkish critics of the Truman administration, and who had advocated crossing of the 38th Parallel northward, for instance, now grumbled that he would have stayed out of Korea from the outset if he had been president in June

³ “Korea,” *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, 1935-1971* (New York, 1972), 960-61. The poll was taken between January 1 and 5, 1951, and released on January 22, 1951. 9 percent of those polled had no opinion; Steven Casey, *Selling the Korean War*, 205-6.

of 1950. In light of the new situation, Taft suggested, he would “get out and fall back to a defensive position in Japan and Formosa,” as if completely unaware of what he had argued half a year earlier.⁴

Members of the Truman administration were keenly aware of such changes in popular sentiments, and began discussing the possibility of retreating from Korea in a “face-saving way.”⁵ At any time for any administration, such would not be an easy task, and President Truman, himself, said that the United States must hold the line for a “long long time” in order not to “lose face” by withdrawing in a hurry.⁶ Secretary of State Dean Acheson later recalled the situation at the time of the cease-fire resolution in January 1951, frankly admitting that the administration did not want to accept the resolution: “[The cease-fire resolution] obviously was a very difficult one for us to support in view of the present attitude—the then attitude of public opinion and the existing status of affairs in Korea.”⁷

Deeply concerned with the tide of popular impressions resulting from their actions, the administration utilized all available policy options for the purpose of increasing, or, they hoped, fortifying support for the administration. One example is President Truman’s direction to General Douglas MacArthur in mid-January. In a top-secret telegram, the president explained that the situation in Korea had been

⁴ “Daily Opinion Summary,” January 1951, National Archives, College Park, MD; Casey 205.

⁵ The term “face-saving way” was expressed by Vice President. “Minutes of National Security Council Meeting, 3:05pm, November 28m Tuesday at the White House,” Folder “Attlee Meeting - December 1950,” Box 149, Foreign Affairs File, Subject File, President’s Secretary’s Files, HSTP, HSTL, Independence, MO; *FRUS 1950, Vol. VII: Korea*, 1242-49.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Dean Acheson, Princeton Seminars, February 14, 1954; Reel 6, Track 2, 10-11, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, MO.

receiving the “utmost attention” in the United States, and gave the general several major strategic purposes, including:

A) To demonstrate that aggression will not be accepted by us...and to provide a rallying point around which the spirits and energies of the free world can be mobilized to meet the world-wide threat which the Soviet Union now poses.

B) To deflate the dangerously exaggerated political and military prestige of Communist China which now threaten to undermine the resistance of non-Communist Asia and to consolidate the hold of Communism on China itself [...].

J) To alert the people behind the iron curtain that their masters are bent upon wars of aggression and that this crime will be resisted by the free world.⁸

Apparently, administrators’ primary concern was not so much about military tactics or geopolitics, but the politics of impressions at home. The concern was not really with winning or losing territory in Korea in itself, but with far-reaching repercussions of the fighting in Korea on popular attitudes at home, which often shifting with the winning or losing of territory in Korea.

In formulating Korean War policy, policymakers were haunted by fears concerning whether they appeared tough enough, whether they looked anti-communist, or in China’s case, anti-American, enough, whether they were patriotic enough, and whether they were appealing enough. In a sense, they did not necessarily originate policies or strategies, nor did they control the situations. Nor did they impose certain policies as they wished. Instead of originating, they were reacting. Instead of *leading* society, they were in many ways *reading* society in order to modify their own attitudes. Policymakers, in this sense, were not necessarily seated at the “top,” from which they arbitrarily gave orders; rather, they too were

⁸ Telegram, Harry S. Truman to Douglas MacArthur, January 14, 1951, Douglas MacArthur Papers, RG 6, Box 1, Folder 11, MacArthur Memorial Archives, Norfolk, VA; *FRUS* 1951, Vol. VII, Korea and China, Part 1, 77-78.

parts of chains of actions and reactions in a manner similar to the way nameless ordinary people participated in politics, however their respective degrees of influence might have differed. This phenomenon is, of course, not particularly unique to the postwar period; rather, what appeared in the formation of the imagined reality of the Cold War was a confirmation that the “reality” had developed in an era that had been evolving since the early twentieth century: an epoch characterized by the rise of the social.

It is interesting to think about why, at the peak of such an era of the rise of the social, the state system seemed to reach its zenith, than ever before. As we have seen, in China and the United States, a sense of trust toward the state (party) increased, and, in other places like Taiwan, South Korea, and the Philippines, the system of the nation-state itself was built. In these places, what happened seemed to be the restoration (creation) of a classical mode of state—classical in the sense that it looked more like a conventional state than those observed in the age of globalized colonial empires of the nineteenth century and first-half of the twentieth century. In other words, what happened in the mid-twentieth century seemed more like a historical *throwback*, than a development of empire, more like partition than global unification. How did it happen? Why, at the peak of the era of the social, did many people desire to participate in the restoration (creation) of a classical style of state order?

Observing situations circa 1950, one conclusion might be drawn. To put it simply, there was a need for order. Various kinds of social and cultural conflicts had been evolving since the end of World War II, and domestic societies in many parts of

the world had been turning into “battlefields.” Such domestic conflicts derived from diverse factors, such as the devastation of the war, social changes along with the war, the rise of new actors in society, effects of globalization within colonial empires, and, in some cases, the disappearance of such empires. Many, though not all, societies shared similar problems, and such local conflicts flared up similarly and simultaneously with the outbreak of the Korean War, when it was interpreted as possibly sparking off another world war.

It is no wonder that similar reactions appeared in these societies. With the outbreak of the Korean War, the logic of the Cold War wore more of an aura of truth than ever before, and, under that logic, diverse groups of dissenters, nonconformists, and elements of possible “disorder” were wiped out, and many social problems that had remained unresolved were quickly “settled,” bringing “order” and “harmony” to societies. It is important to note that, while similar phenomena occurred at the same time in different places, such were not of a coordinated nature. In effect, they developed separately, but did so in a way that pointed to a common pattern: the consolidation of the “reality” of the Cold War along with waves of domestic suppression. In this sense, the materialization of the “reality” of the Cold War on a worldwide scale exemplified one of the most significant characteristics of the modern, contemporary world—an epoch of simultaneity.

What was shared in these simultaneous phenomenon was the function of the Cold War in restoring state order at the international level, recapturing and preserving social “harmony” at the national level, and “overcoming” diverse social and cultural wars at social and community levels—a mechanism that operated quite

“well” for decades that followed. Viewed in this way, the Cold War was not simply a geopolitical or ideological conflict between the two superpowers, but rather an imagined reality, which functioned as a social mechanism for tranquilizing chaotic situations of the postwar period and putting an end to diverse kinds of “wars” at home. When such an imagined reality habitualized and institutionalized worldwide, it became a *realized imagining*, perpetuating itself, so long as the act of imagining continued. It is important to note that a series of processes of creating, consolidating, and perpetuating such an imagined reality was, in many ways, conducted at the people’s initiative, along with the intentions of high-ranking policymakers. As a matter of fact, actual participants who promoted the politics of the Cold War through various domestic purges in many parts of the world were not necessarily state officials, but, often everyday people. In this sense, the crux of the Cold War was not so much about an East-West confrontation or balance of power, but about struggles within each society. In essence, it was people’s wars at home.

This leads to a final point about the meaning of studying the Cold War today. We usually think that the Cold War ended two decades ago. This is true when we view the Cold War as a geopolitical, ideological confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States. However, such is not the case if we see the “reality” of the Cold War as a gigantic social construction of an imagined reality, in which many people participated in restoring state order and “harmony” through silencing disagreements at home. When we see the Cold War in this way, then, the phenomenon does not appear as a peculiar event in a time long passed. Rather, it can be said that such a pattern has been reappearing and, in fact, reinforced in the

so-called post-Cold War world in the name of the “Clash of Civilizations” and, in particular, in the decade of “War on Terror” following September 11, 2001.

To think about the experiences of the Cold War—not so much in terms of the U.S.-Soviet confrontation but as part of a social mechanism of restoring order at home on a global scale—is, thus, to think about the imagined and constructed nature of “reality” and “history,” and their functions on the ground and among people, which, in turn, forces us to consider the imagined nature of reality, beliefs, and common sense to which we adhere today. How did an imagined reality emerge and gain such verisimilitude? How did numerous people like us join in and play roles in the making of such an imagined reality, and why? Our experiences of the imagined reality of the Cold War have provided warnings, but it seems we have not yet taken them seriously. In a sense, while this study focuses primarily on a short period of time during the Korean War circa 1950, it also intends to shed light on the fundamental nature and problems of the contemporary, globalized world we live in today.

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